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People gather during a federal workers protest rally at the Federal Building Thursday, Jan., 10, 2019, in Ogden, Utah.

Associated Press.
Page 3



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US apparel firm cuts off Chinese factory in internment camp

By **MARTHA MENDOZA and YANAN WANG, Associated Press**

A U.S. supplier of T-shirts and other team apparel to college bookstores cut its ties Wednesday with a Chinese company that drew workers from an internment camp holding targeted members of ethnic minority groups.

In recent years, authorities in the far west Chinese region of Xinjiang have detained an estimated 1 million Uighurs and Kazakhs in heavily-secured facilities where detainees say they are ordered to renounce their language and religion while pledging loyalty to the China's ruling Communist Party.

Last month an Associated Press investigation found the Chinese government had also started forcing some detainees to work in manufacturing and food industries.

The investigation tracked recent shipments from one such factory, the privately-owned Hetian Taida Apparel, located inside an



In this file image from undated video footage run by China's CCTV via AP Video, Muslim trainees work in a garment factory at the Hotan Vocational Education and Training Center in Hotan, Xinjiang, northwest China.

internment camp, to Badger Sportswear, a leading supplier in Statesville, North Carolina.

In a statement posted to its website, Badger said Wednesday it will no longer do business with Hetian Tai-

da, nor import any goods from the same region "given the controversy around doing business" there.

"Furthermore, we will not ship any product sourced from Hetian Taida currently in our possession," the company said, adding that the supplier accounted for about 1 percent of Badger's total annual sales.

Repeated calls to Hetian Taida's chairman, Wu Hongbo, rang unanswered Wednesday. In a previous conversation with the AP, Wu said while Hetian Taida was located in the same compound as one camp

that the government calls a

"vocational skills education and training center," Hetian Taida was not involved in the camp's activities.

However, Wu said his company employed 20 to 30 "trainees" from the center as part of the region's efforts to alleviate poverty.

Asked about the case, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Lu Kang said Thursday that while the ministry doesn't generally comment on individual business decisions, Badger appeared to have been acting on "misinformation." The vocational training centers in Xinjiang are "totally different from so-called forced labor," Lu said, referring further questions on the camps to statements made by the regional government, which maintains that the centers help poor Uighurs gain employable skills. □

Associated Press.



In this Dec. 5, 2018, file photo, two layers of barbed wire fencing ring the "Hotan City apparel employment training base" where clothing manufacturer Hetian Taida has a factory in Hotan in western China's Xinjiang region.

Associated Press.

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Correction: Trump-TV Ratings story

NEW YORK (AP) — In a story Jan. 9 about television ratings for President Donald Trump's prime-time speech Tuesday, The Associated Press erroneously reported the estimated number of viewers. The Nielsen company's public report about the number of viewers did not include people who watched on CBS, because the network's contract with Nielsen expired at the end of last year and hasn't been renewed.

A corrected version of the

story is below:

NEW YORK (AP) — An estimated 43.3 million people saw President Donald Trump and Democratic leaders speak to the nation on border security and the partial government shutdown.

That's about two million fewer viewers than Trump had for his 2018 State of the Union address. The Nielsen company said Wednesday that a similar presidential address, when Barack Obama spoke in 2014

about fighting the Islamic state, was seen by 34 million people.

There was some internal debate at networks about whether to grant Trump the TV time for Tuesday's speech, but 11 separate networks aired it.

Fox News Channel with 8.044 million viewers and CBS with 8.043 million were in a virtual dead heat as the top destination. NBC was third with 7 million, followed by ABC, MSNBC, CNN and Fox broadcasting. □

At the border, Trump moves closer to emergency declaration

By **CATHERINE LUCEY, LISA MASCARO and ZEKE MILLER, Associated Press**

MCALLEN, Texas (AP) —

Taking the shutdown fight to the Mexican border, President Donald Trump edged closer Thursday to declaring a national emergency in an extraordinary end run around Congress to fund his long-promised border wall. Pressure was mounting to find an escape hatch from the three-week impasse that has closed parts of the government, cutting scattered services and leaving hundreds of thousands of workers without pay.

Trump, visiting McAllen, Texas, and the Rio Grande to highlight what he says is a crisis of drugs and crime, said that “if for any reason we don’t get this going” — an agreement with House Democrats who have refused to approve the \$5.7 billion he demands for the wall — “I will declare a national emergency.”

Some 800,000 workers, more than half of them still on the job, were to miss their first paycheck on Friday under the stoppage,

and Washington was close to setting a dubious record for the longest government shutdown in the nation’s history. Those markers — along with growing effects to national parks, food inspections and the economy overall — left some Republicans on Capitol Hill increasingly uncomfortable with Trump’s demands.

Asked about the plight of those going without pay, the president shifted the focus, saying he felt badly “for people that have family members that have been killed” by criminals who came over the border. Trump was consulting with White House attorneys and allies about using presidential emergency powers to take unilateral action to construct the wall over the objections of Congress. He claimed his lawyers told him the action would withstand legal scrutiny “100 percent.”

Such a move to bypass Congress’ constitutional control of the nation’s purse strings would spark certain legal challenges and bipartisan cries of executive overreach.

A congressional official said the White House has directed the Army Corps of Engineers to look for billions of dollars earmarked last year for disaster response for Puerto Rico and other areas that could be diverted to a border wall as part of the emergency declaration. The official spoke on the condition of anonymity because the official was not authorized to speak publicly.

“We’re either going to have a win, make a compromise — because I think a compromise is a win for everybody — or I will declare a national emergency,” Trump said before departing the White House for his politically flavored visit to the border. He wore his campaign-slogan “Make America Great Again” cap throughout.

It was not clear what a compromise might entail, and there were no indications that one was in the offing. Trump says he won’t reopen the government without money for the wall. Democrats say they favor measures to bolster border security but oppose the

long, impregnable barrier that Trump envisions.

No negotiations were taking place at the Capitol.

Republican Sen. Lindsey Graham of South Carolina said at one point that he didn’t “see a path in Congress” to end the shutdown, then stated later that enough was enough: “It is time for President Trump to use emergency powers to fund the construction of a border wall/barrier.”

Visiting a border patrol station in McAllen, Trump viewed tables piled with weapons and narcotics. Like nearly all drugs trafficked across the border, they were intercepted by agents at official ports of entry, he was told, and not in the remote areas where he wants to extend tall barriers.

Still, he declared: “A wall works. ... Nothing like a wall.” He argued that the U.S. can’t solve the problem without a “very substantial barrier” along the border, but offered exaggerations about the effectiveness of border walls and current apprehensions of those crossing illegally.

Sitting among border patrol officers, state and local officials and military representatives, Trump insisted he was “winning” the shutdown fight and criticized Democrats for asserting he was manufacturing a sense of crisis in order to declare an emergency. “What is manufactured is the use of the word ‘manufactured,’” Trump said.

As he arrived in Texas, several hundred protesters near the airport in McAllen chanted and waved signs opposing a wall. Across the street, a smaller group chanted back: “Build that wall!” In Washington, federal workers denounced Trump at a rally with congressional Democrats, demanding he reopen the government so they can get back to work.

On Capitol Hill, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi accused the president of engaging in political games to fire up his most loyal supporters, suggesting that a heated meeting Wednesday with legislators at the White House had been “a setup” so that Trump could walk out of it. □

Q&A: Enough already! How the government shutdown might end

By **ALAN FRAM, Associated Press**

WASHINGTON (AP) —

Somehow, some day, the nasty deadlock between President Donald Trump and congressional Democrats that’s shuttered federal agencies for a near-record 20 days will end. The only real questions are when, how and who will be crowned the winner in public opinion polls and ultimately by voters.

Things got bleaker this week when House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., told Trump at a fiery White House meeting that Democrats would not bow to his demand for \$5.7 billion to start building a wall along the border with Mexico. Trump slammed his hand on the negotiating table and stormed out, Democrats said. Trump said he calmly left the room, say-



Supporters of President Donald Trump wait outside the McAllen International Airport for Trump’s visit to the southern border, Thursday, Jan. 10, 2019, in McAllen, Texas.

ing, “Bye-bye.”

A look at how the impasse might be resolved:

Q: What’s the easiest solution?

A: None is easy. Trump’s conservative base strongly backs his fight for wall money, even if it has meant a

viewed as a capitulation.

Q: What’s the likeliest way out?

A: Increasingly some people think that could be for Trump to declare a national emergency. By law, that could give him authority to use some money in the military’s budget for construction projects for the wall.

Trump could argue he did secure money for the wall, his most memorable campaign pledge, and overcame Democratic objections. Democrats could say they didn’t give in and they could suits to block the move, claiming Trump had exceeded his authority by stretching the meaning of emergency. Trump could decide to finally sign bills reopening the government.

Leaving the White House Thursday to visit the southwestern border, Trump strongly suggested he

would take that route. “I have the absolute right to declare a national emergency,” he told reporters. He added: “If I have to, I will. I have no doubt about it.”

Q: Why not just do it?

A: Plenty of people on both sides hate the idea, and its legality in this instance is questionable.

Some Republicans, including Texas Rep. Mac Thornberry, the top Republican on the House Armed Services Committee, say strengthening border infrastructure is not the military’s job and they oppose siphoning defense dollars for that purpose. Many Republicans worry that by stretching the definition of “emergency,” Trump opens the door to a future Democratic president circumventing lawmakers in ways the GOP would oppose. □

Associated Press

partial government shutdown. Democrats’ liberal stalwarts just as ardently oppose giving in. Trump and Democratic leaders have been so insistent on not surrendering that each would risk rebellion by supporters if they agreed to something

Oregon begins killing sea lions after relocation fails

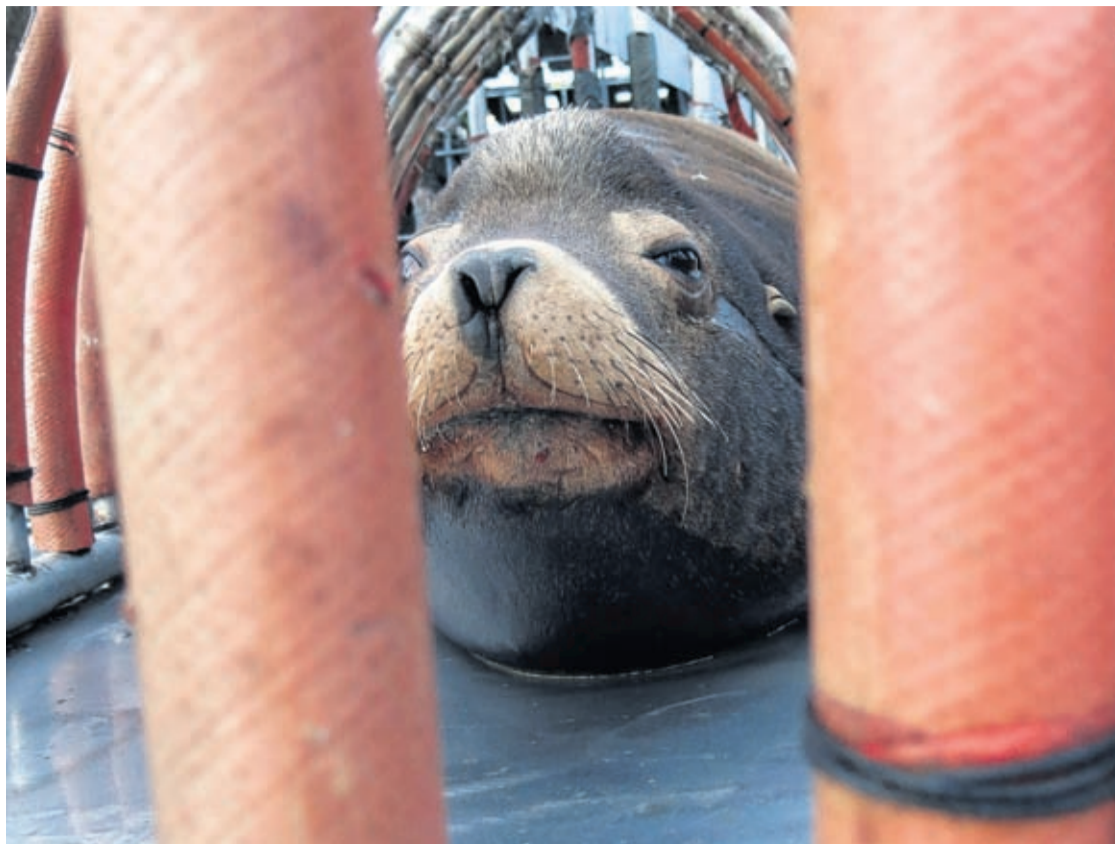
By GILLIAN FLACCUS, Associated Press

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — Oregon wildlife officials have started killing California sea lions that threaten a fragile and unique type of trout in the Willamette River, a body of water that's miles inland from the coastal areas where the massive carnivorous aquatic mammals usually congregate to feed.

The state Department of Fish and Wildlife obtained a federal permit in November to kill up to 93 California sea lions annually below Willamette Falls south of Portland, Oregon, to protect the winter run of the fish that begin life as rainbow trout but become steelhead when they travel to the ocean.

As of last week, wildlife managers have killed three of the animals using traps they used last year to relocate the sea lions, said Bryan Wright, project manager for the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's marine resources program.

The adult male sea lions,



In this March 14, 2018, file photo, a California sea lion peers out from a restraint nicknamed "The Squeeze" near Oregon City, Ore.

which weigh nearly 1,000 pounds (454 kilograms) each, have learned that they can loiter under the falls and snack on the vulnerable steelhead as the fish power their way upriver to the streams where they

hatched. The trout travel to sea from inland rivers, grow to adulthood as steelhead in the Pacific Ocean and then return to their natal river to spawn. They can grow to 55 pounds and live up to 11

years. The sea lions' numbers dropped dramatically but have rebounded from 30,000 in the late 1960s to about 300,000 today because of the 1972 Marine Mammal Protection Act.

With their numbers growing, the dog-faced sea lions are venturing ever farther inland up the Columbia River and its tributaries in Oregon and Washington — and their appetite is having disastrous consequences, scientists have said.

Last winter, a record-low 512 wild winter steelhead completed the journey past the Willamette Falls, according to state counts. Less than 30 years ago, that number was more than 15,000.

The sea lions are eating so many winter steelhead at Willamette Falls that certain runs are at a high risk of going extinct, according to a 2017 study by wildlife biologists.

Wildlife officials moved about a dozen sea lions to the coast near the small city of Newport last year, but the animals ended up swimming back to the falls within days. □

Associated Press.

years.

The sea lions breed each summer off Southern California and northern Mexico, then the males cruise up the Pacific Coast to forage. Hunted for their thick fur, the mammals' num-

Las Vegas police seeking soccer star's DNA in rape case

By KEN RITTER, Associated Press

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Cristiano Ronaldo is being asked by police to provide a DNA sample in an investigation of a Nevada woman's allegation that he raped her in his Las Vegas hotel penthouse in 2009 and paid her to keep quiet, the soccer star's lawyer and Las Vegas police said Thursday.

Attorney Peter S. Christiansen downplayed the development, denied the rape allegation and called evidence collection common in any investigation. Police said in a statement that an official request has been submitted to Italian authorities for a DNA sample from the superstar player. Officer Laura Meltzer, a department spokeswoman, said she had no immediate information about where the request



In this Oct. 22, 2018, file photo, Juventus' Cristiano Ronaldo attends a press conference at Old Trafford, Manchester.

was made or whether a warrant was involved.

"Mr. Ronaldo has always maintained, as he does today, that what occurred in Las Vegas in 2009 was consensual in nature," Christiansen said, "so it is not surprising that DNA would be present, nor that the police would make this very standard request as part of their investigation." □

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Trump falsely claims Obama support for wall

By HOPE YEN and JILL COLVIN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — With the deceptive use of a video, President Donald Trump on Thursday heartily thanked his White House predecessor for supporting his policy at the Mexican border. Barack Obama has offered no such support; only criticism.

Trump also denied that he ever expected Mexico to make a direct payment for his border wall, despite a call in a campaign policy paper for a “one-time payment” from Mexico of \$5 billion to \$10 billion, with options for Mexico to contribute in alternative ways. Mexico is refusing to contribute at all. A look at Trump’s statements Thursday as he traveled to Texas to make his case for what he calls a security and humanitarian crisis, a possible precursor to declaring a national emergency at the border:

OBAMA VIDEO

TRUMP: “President Obama, thank you for your great support — I have been saying this all along!” — tweet, accompanied by video of Obama speaking as president in 2014.

TRUMP: “Obama used to call it a crisis at the border, too.” — remarks before departing the White House for Texas.

THE FACTS: Obama’s remarks in the short video clip do not support Trump’s proposal for a border wall or endorse the path Trump is considering now: declaring a national emergency that might enable him to circumvent Congress and unilaterally spend money on the wall. Instead, Obama was asking Congress to approve an emergency appropriation to deal with a surge of tens



President Donald Trump salutes as a U.S. customs and Border Protection helicopter passes as he tours the U.S. border with Mexico at the Rio Grande on the southern border, Thursday, Jan. 10, 2019, in McAllen, Texas.

of thousands of unaccompanied children and youth, mostly from Central American, trying to cross the border from Mexico.

“We now have an actual humanitarian crisis on the border,” Obama said at the time, accompanied by Vice President Joe Biden. He was referring specifically to the surge of minors that year. That crisis eventually eased as the U.S. stepped up border enforcement, surveillance and resources for the waves of unaccompanied children. Now, a sharp increase in the number of families at the border, coupled with the Trump administration’s hard-line stance, is overwhelming border resources, worsening a backlog in the asylum system and leaving migrants to live in abysmal conditions on the Mexican side. Trump, however, has been unable to convince Congress that the border poses a national security risk. He has made a series of statements falsely

claiming that terrorists are pouring in from Mexico, that a wall would choke off shipments of illicit drugs, which actually come mainly through legal ports of entry, and that people who get in the country illegally commit a disproportionate share of violent crime.

Late in his presidency, Obama was repeatedly critical of Trump’s immigration stance and the wall

specifically. In May 2016, for example, he said: “Suggesting that we can build an endless wall along our borders, and blame our challenges on immigrants — that doesn’t just run counter to our history as the world’s melting pot; it contradicts the evidence that our growth and our innovation and our dynamism has always been spurred by our ability to attract striv-

ers from every corner of the globe.”

MEXICO AND THE WALL

TRUMP, on Mexico paying for the wall: “I never meant they’re going to write out a check.” — remarks before departure to Texas.

TRUMP: “Mexico is paying for the wall indirectly. And when I said Mexico will pay for the wall, in front of thousands and thousands of people, obviously they’re not going to write a check.” — remarks before departure.

TRUMP: “They’re paying for the wall in a great trade deal.” — remarks in Texas.

THE FACTS: Actually, a Trump campaign policy paper envisaged an explicit payment from Mexico: “It’s an easy decision for Mexico: make a one-time payment of \$5-10 billion,” the paper said.

The plan also outlined various ways for Trump to compel Mexico to pay for the wall, such as by Washington cutting off billions of dollars in remittances sent back to Mexico by immigrants living in the U.S., or by recouping the money through trade tariffs or higher visa fees. None of that has happened. □

MLK daughter: Firing not best for weatherman who used slur

ROCHESTER, N.Y. (AP) — A daughter of Martin Luther King Jr. says an upstate New York TV meteorologist who uttered a racial slur while saying her father’s name shouldn’t have been fired. Bernice King says on TMZ Thursday there should be repercussions for WHEC’s Jeremy Kappell for apparently referring to a park in his weather report as “Martin Luther Coon King Jr. Park.” But she says bias training or demotion might be better in this case.

Kappell has apologized for what he called a mispronunciation.

The firing has sparked a passionate debate in Rochester and beyond. NBC weatherman and personality Al Roker tweeted in defense of Kappell on Wednesday. The station says Kappell’s utterance was inexcusable.

Rochester Mayor Lovely Warren had called for his ouster. She reiterated her position in a video posted Thursday discussing MLK’s legacy. □

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Cohen, ex-Trump lawyer, to testify publicly before Congress

By **MARY CLARE JALONICK, ERIC TUCKER and CHAD DAY, Associated Press**

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump's former lawyer, Michael Cohen, will testify publicly before a House committee next month in a hearing that could serve as the opening salvo of a promised Democratic effort to scrutinize Trump, his conflicts of interest and his ties to Russia. The House Oversight and Reform Committee announced Thursday that Cohen will testify before that panel Feb. 7, a little more than a month after the Democrats took the House majority.

The hearing marks the latest step in Cohen's transformation from a trusted legal adviser to the president to



In this April 11, 2018, file photo, Michael Cohen, President Donald Trump's former attorney, walks along a sidewalk in New York. Associated Press

a public antagonist who has cooperated extensively against him. It is likely to pull back the curtain on key episodes involving

Trump's personal life and business dealings, including hush-money payments to women and a proposed Moscow real estate deal, that federal prosecutors have been dissecting for months. Cohen is a pivotal figure in investigations by special counsel Robert

Mueller into potential coordination between Russia and the Trump campaign and by federal prosecutors in New York into campaign finance violations related to payments to buy the silence of a porn actress and a former Playboy Playmate who say they had sex with Trump. Federal prosecutors have said Trump directed those payments during the campaign. Trump has denied having the extramarital affairs. Cohen has pleaded guilty in both investigations and was sentenced last month to three years in prison. An adviser to Cohen, Lanny Davis, said shortly after he was sentenced that the former political fixer wanted to testify and "state publicly all he knows." In a statement released on Thursday, Cohen said he had accepted the invitation "in furtherance of my commitment to cooperate and provide

the American people with answers." Cohen added: "I look forward to having the privilege of being afforded a platform with which to give a full and credible account of the events which have transpired." Trump has denied wrongdoing and sought to minimize Cohen's statements by painting him as a liar. Asked by reporters in Texas on Thursday about Cohen's appearance, Trump said he's "not worried about it at all." Cohen acknowledged in the Mueller investigation that he lied to Congress by saying negotiations over a Trump Tower in Moscow had ended in January 2016 when he actually pursued the project into that June, well into Trump's 2016 presidential campaign. In New York, he acknowledged his involvement in payments to porn actress Stormy Daniels and former Playboy model Karen McDougal. □

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The shutdown today: President tours border, nixes Davos

By **The Associated Press**

Here's what's up with the partial government shutdown on Day 20.

WHAT'S NEW TODAY

President Donald Trump visited the U.S.-Mexico border to highlight the dangers posed by drug trafficking, human smuggling and illegal immigration as he argued for more border wall funding. Trump announced he was nixing his trip to Davos, Switzerland, later this month. He blamed Democrats' "intransigence" on border security, perhaps signaling to Democrats that he's preparing for a longer shutdown.

QUOTES OF THE DAY

Trump: "So we're either go-

ing to have a win, make a compromise —because I think a compromise is a win for everybody— or I will declare a national emergency." IRS employee Krystle Kirkpatrick of Ogden, Utah: "It's a very scary feeling to know that your payday is coming and nothing is coming. I don't think the administration and the houses of Congress understand the repercussions of not having a paycheck."

WHAT'S COMING NEXT?

Hundreds of thousands of federal employees will be going without a paycheck on Friday. The partial government shutdown is playing havoc with already backlogged immigration

courts, forcing hearings to be postponed for thousands of immigrants

WHAT REMAINS CLOSED

Nine of the 15 Cabinet-level departments have not been funded, including Agriculture, Homeland Security, State, Transportation, Interior and Justice. Some iconic National Park facilities are shuttered as are the Smithsonian museums and the National Zoo in Washington. Nearly everyone at NASA is being told to stay home, as are most at the Internal Revenue Service, which is responsible for processing tax returns and issuing refunds, though the administration says tax refunds will go out. □

Liberals dare Trump to back their bills lowering drug prices



Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., center, joined from left by Sen. Richard Blumenthal, D-Conn., Rep. Peter Welch, D-Vt., Rep. Elijah Cummings, D-Md., and Sen. Cory Booker, D-N.J., speaks to reporters during a news conference on Capitol Hill in Washington, Thursday, Jan. 10, 2019.

Associated Press

By RICARDO ALONSO-ZALDIVAR, Associated Press WASHINGTON (AP) —

Challenging President Donald Trump to make good on his pledge to cut prescription drug prices, congressional liberals proposed legislation Thursday to bring U.S. prices in line with the much lower costs in other countries.

The Democratic bills stand little chance of becoming law in a divided government. But the effort could put Republicans on the defensive by echoing Trump's pledge to force drugmakers to cut prices.

Democrats and Trump agree that people in the United States shouldn't have to pay more for their medications than do those in other economically advanced countries.

The Trump administration has put forward its own plan for reducing drug prices, but industry analysts have seen little impact so far. The pharmaceutical industry said the Democratic bills would "wreak havoc on the U.S. health care system."

The new legislation was offered by Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., Rep. Elijah Cummings, D-Md., and others. Cummings leads the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, which is expected to take a major role on drug pricing.

The lawmakers want to:

—Open up generic competition to patent-protected U.S. brand-name drugs that are deemed "excessively priced."

—Allow Medicare to di-

rectly negotiate with drugmakers.

—Let consumers import lower-priced medications from Canada.

There was no immediate response from the administration.

"Today I say to President Trump, if you are serious about lowering the cost of prescription drugs in this country, support our legislation and get your Republican colleagues on board," Sanders said at a Capitol Hill press conference.

"No more talk. No more tweets," said Cummings. "The American people want action."

Holly Campbell, a spokeswoman for the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America, said Sanders' plan would harm U.S. patients. The industry argues that government price regulation could limit access to some medicines, undermine financial incentives for research, and compromise safety standards. Sanders says drugmakers are primarily interested in protecting profits.

As a presidential candidate, Trump initially called for Medicare to negotiate drug prices and favored allowing people to legally import lower-priced medications from abroad.

But Medicare negotiation is a political nonstarter for most Republicans, who favor a free-market approach to the U.S. pharmaceutical industry and prize its capacity for innovation. As president, Trump has come out with a plan to

lower drug costs that relies on dozens of regulatory actions. The goal is to eliminate incentives for drugmakers, pharmacy benefit managers and insurers to stifle competition at the expense of consumers. Independent experts say the administration proposals would have an impact, but not limit the ability of drug

companies to set high prices.

Time and again, Trump has complained that other countries where governments set drug prices are taking advantage of Americans.

Indeed, one of his ideas would shift Medicare payments for drugs administered in doctors' offices to a

level based on international prices. "We are taking aim at the global freeloading that forces American consumers to subsidize lower prices in foreign countries through higher prices in our country," the president said when he made that proposal shortly before last year's congressional elections. □

Brexit sparks showdown between UK Parliament and government

By JILL LAWLESS
Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — As Brexit enters its endgame, the big divide is not between the U.K. and the European Union, but between Britain's government and its Parliament.

Since Britain and the EU struck a divorce deal late last year, the U.K.'s executive and legislature have been at war, with Prime Minister Theresa May struggling to win Parliament's backing for the deal ahead of a vote next week, and lawmakers battling to grab control of the Brexit process. A series of heated debates and stunning government defeats has made for high political drama — and destabilized a country without a formal written constitution, whose democracy rests on centuries of accumulated laws, precedents and conventions. As lawmakers held a second day of rancorous debate on the Brexit deal on Thursday, London School of Economics professor Iain Begg said Britain is "getting very close" to



Pro-Brexit, left, and anti-Brexit, right, protesters debate their views outside parliament in London, Thursday Jan. 10, 2019.

a constitutional crisis. "It's pretty clear that if Theresa May loses the vote next week, we don't actually know what happens next," Begg said. "And that's beyond political." The divorce agreement lays out the terms of the U.K.'s departure from the EU on March

29 and sets the framework for future relations. It was sealed by Britain and the EU in November — a milestone that should have set the U.K. on the road to an orderly exit.

But it has displeased both sides of Britain's Brexit divide. Many lawmakers who

back leaving the EU say it leaves the U.K. tethered to the bloc's rules and unable to forge an independent trade policy, while pro-Europeans argue it is inferior to the frictionless economic relationship Britain currently enjoys as an EU member. May postponed a vote on the agreement in December to avert a crushing defeat, and signs suggest the House of Commons will reject the deal in a rescheduled vote on Tuesday.

An already fractious Brexit debate turned feverish Wednesday when lawmakers passed an amendment forcing the government to come back to Parliament with a new plan within three working days of the deal being rejected.

Pro-Brexit lawmakers said the amendment should not have been allowed. They accused Commons Speaker John Bercow, who is supposed to be the impartial arbiter of House rules, of tearing up parliamentary precedent and siding with anti-Brexit legislators.

Conservative legislator Crispin Blunt said it appeared to many "that the referee is no longer neutral." Another Conservative, Adam Holloway, accused Bercow of having a rude anti-Brexit sticker on his car. (Bercow replied

that the car, and the sticker, belonged to his wife).

Britain's lively and partisan newspapers also weighed in. "Out of order," blared the Daily Mail, while the tabloid Sun branded Bercow the "Speaker of the devil." Bercow was unrepentant. "My job is not to be a cheerleader for the executive branch," he said. "My job is to stand up for the rights of the House of Commons."

Unfortunately for constitutional clarity, experts say both Bercow and his detractors have a point. As the ultimate authority in the House of Commons, the speaker had the power to allow a vote on an amendment to the government's business motion. But in doing so, he ignored both precedent and the advice of parliamentary staff.

The incident was the latest in a series of power struggles between the executive and the legislature over Brexit. After Britons voted in a 2016 referendum to leave the EU, May's government tried to trigger the formal exit process without a vote in Parliament. After a legal battle, the Supreme Court ruled that lawmakers must be consulted.

Since then, government and Parliament have feuded about who is driving the Brexit car. Lawmakers' position was strengthened when May lost her parliamentary majority in an ill-advised snap election in 2017. "We are seeing pretty open tension between Parliament and government, and a Parliament that is willing to be quite assertive," said Alice Lilly, a senior researcher at the Institute for Government think tank. "Where that will go from here, who knows?"

To complicate matters, both Parliament and May's Conservative administration are split down the middle over Brexit. A majority of lawmakers oppose a no-deal Brexit, which would impose barriers to trade with the EU, potentially triggering gridlock at ports, shortages of goods and volatile public anger. □

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Backstage drama accompanies Romania's debut in EU presidency

By **RAF CASERT**
ALISON MUTLER
Associated Press

BUCHAREST, Romania (AP)

— The United States is not the only country with a government limping from self-inflicted injuries that baffle foreign audiences. In Europe, backstage drama came to the fore Thursday as Romania made its debut in a new role.

The formerly communist country that assumed the European Union's presidency has a president and prime minister fighting over which of them should represent Romania at EU summits. Oh, and the convicted politician who controls Bucharest's pedals of power from the backseat is suing the bloc over fraud allegations.

At an august concert hall in the capital, apprehension was evident several times during a Thursday evening ceremony to mark Romania's six-month term in the EU presidency.

"It depends only on you whether for Europe, Romanian politics will be a good example or a dire warning," EU Council President Donald Tusk told his hosts during a speech delivered in the Romanian language. As snow fell, hundreds of protesters outside the Antenaem concert hall waved EU and Romanian flags while trying to put a spotlight on government corruption.

A light projector beamed a green message onto the



Members of a choir arrive at the Romanian Atheneum concert hall in Bucharest, Romania, Thursday, Jan. 10, 2019, before an event marking the official start of the Romanian Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

palace where EU officials planned to dine, saying the protesters "want the EU" and Romania's ruling Social Democratic Party "wants Russia." During the ceremony inside, politicians listened to an orchestra performing George Enescu's often intense and impulsive Romanian Rhapsody — and heard some bluntly worded speeches.

"As a reminiscence of the communist past, some institutions and decision-makers are still holding on to the unchecked power they have previously indulged in," the president of Romania's Senate, Calin Popescu Tariceanu said. He did not specify the places and people he accused of claiming the same unaccountability they collectively enjoyed before 1989," the year communism fell in Romania.

Holding the EU presidency

matters to the bloc's member nations, especially one like Romania that joined only a dozen years ago. The role requires keeping EU business flowing during the six-month term, but lacks the authority to block or undermine the communal business of the bloc.

Some Romanians say the events of recent weeks have made for a dysfunctional government. Others prefer to see it as evidence of a healthy democracy,

which would be another relatively new situation in Romania. "I see nothing unnatural," Romanian Foreign Minister Teodor Melescanu said of the election year political infighting. "On the contrary, I see it as proof of very vivid democratic life." It does make planning difficult.

Iohannis has been representing Romania at the summits of leaders of EU nations. Dancila recently challenged the practice, saying the prime minister should be at the summits as the head of government. Daily feuds have ensued.

For its time holding the presidency, Romania chose "Cohesion, a common European value" as its motto. Another awkwardly timed problem arose Thursday, when word went public that the chairman of Romania's ruling party had sued the European Commission — led by Juncker.

Liviu Dragnea, the country's most powerful politician and de facto leader, brought the case to the European Court of Justice

over allegations he defrauded the EU.

The European Anti-Fraud Office, OLAF, said 21 million euros (\$24.15 million) was fraudulently paid to officials for road construction in Romania. The alleged misuse of funds from 2001-2012 were when he headed a county council in southern Romania. Romania's anti-corruption prosecutors are investigating whether Dragnea set up an organized crime group with other officials and forged documents to illicitly obtain EU funds. Dragnea is the only high-profile Romanian politician who will be absent from Thursday evening's opening ceremony. He is barred from being prime minister because of a conviction for vote-rigging.

Romania has received criticism from the EU in other areas. Under Dragnea's Social Democratic Party, the government embarked on a contentious overhaul of Romania's judicial system. The EU has opposed the changes, saying they could protect corrupt officials. □

Associated Press



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Congo's surprise election result could face court challenge

By MATHILDE BOUSSION

Associated Press

KINSHASA, Congo (AP) — Congo appeared ready to achieve its first peaceful transfer of power with the surprise victory Thursday of opposition candidate Felix Tshisekedi, despite clear signs that a rival opposition leader actually won in a landslide.

With no major protests in the capital and limited violence elsewhere in the vast Central African country, the population seemed to be choosing stability over credibility, accepting Tshisekedi's win and the end to President Joseph Kabila's long and turbulent rule. But a court challenge to the results could spin the country into chaos, observers warned.

The influential Catholic Church, which deployed 40,000 observers at all polling stations, said official results did not match its findings, and diplomats briefed on them said rival opposition candidate Martin Fayulu won easily.

Fayulu alleges that Kabila engineered a backroom deal with the largely untested Tshisekedi to protect his power base in a country with staggering mineral wealth. An outspoken campaigner against Congo's widespread graft — it ranked 161th among 180 countries in Transparency International's latest index — Fayulu denounced the official results as "robbery." He called on people to "rise as one man to protect victory." But Congo's population of 80 million remained largely calm.

Some protest violence was reported in Kikwit, a Fayulu stronghold, where police said three people were killed. Police also confirmed "agitations" in Congo's third-largest city, Kisangani, but said they were quickly brought under control.

It was not immediately clear whether Fayulu would challenge the election results in court. Candidates have two days after the announcement to file challenges and the constitutional court has seven

days to consider them before results are final.

Careful statements by the international community

cial results. He was a vocal activist during the two-year delay in Congo's election, insisting it was time for

"Tshisekedi, with his weaker network, looks like being the junior partner in his accommodation with the

cerned about discrepancies" in Congo's results, adding that the United Nations Security Council would discuss the matter on Friday. France's foreign minister bluntly cast doubt on the official results and Belgium's foreign minister expressed concern. There was no immediate United States comment.

The delayed results, 10 days after the Dec. 30 vote, came after international pressure to announce an outcome that reflected the will of the people, with the U.S. threatening sanctions.

The largely peaceful election faced numerous problems as many voting machines that Congo used for the first time malfunctioned. Dozens of polling centers opened hours late as materials went missing. Most alarming to many Congolese, some 1 million of the country's 40 million voters were barred from participating, with the electoral commission blaming a deadly Ebola virus outbreak.

The difference between Tshisekedi and Fayulu in official results was some 684,000 votes. Some observers said the barred voters could have made the difference.

Congo's government cut internet service the day after the vote to prevent speculation on social media. It remained off in parts of the country on Thursday. Some Congolese weary of Kabila's 18-year rule, the two turbulent years of election delays and years of conflict that killed millions of people said they simply wanted peace. Some said they would be happy as long as Fayulu or Tshisekedi won, recalling the violence that followed past disputed elections.

Kabila has ruled since 2001 in the troubled nation rich in the minerals key to smartphones around the world. He is barred from serving three consecutive terms, but until he announced last year that he would step aside many Congolese feared he'd find a way to stay in office. □



This Nov. 23, 2018, file photo shows Felix Tshisekedi of Congo's Union for Democracy and Social Progress opposition party, at a press conference in Nairobi, Kenya.

Associated Press

did not congratulate Tshisekedi, merely taking note of official results and urging peace and stability in a country with little of it. Observers appeared to be watching for the reactions of Fayulu's supporters.

Two diplomats said all major election observation missions, including those of the African Union and the Southern African Development Community, showed similar results to those of the Catholic Church. The diplomats spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak to the press.

Tshisekedi, who received 38 percent of the vote according to official results, had not been widely considered the leading candidate. Long in the shadow of his father, the late opposition leader Etienne, he startled Congo last year by breaking away from the opposition's unity candidate, Fayulu, to stand on his own.

Fayulu, a former Exxon manager and Kinshasa lawmaker, received 34 percent of the vote in the offi-

Kabila to go. Fayulu was backed by two popular opposition leaders barred by the government from running.

Even before the election announcement, some observers suggested that Kabila's government might make a deal with Tshisekedi as hopes faded for ruling party candidate Emmanuel Ramazani Shadary, who received just 23 percent of the vote.

Many Congolese objected to Shadary, suspecting that he would allow Kabila to continue to rule from behind the scenes and protect his vast assets.

Several Congo analysts agreed that it appeared Kabila made a quiet agreement with Tshisekedi, saying Fayulu would have posed more of a threat.

"If Fayulu and his allies, with their own independent security and financial networks, had taken power they would have changed the power structure of Congo and definitively ousted Kabila and his clan," said Patrick Smith of the newsletter Africa Confidential.

Kabila establishment." Pierre Englebert, a fellow at the Atlantic Council's Africa Center, said Tshisekedi would be more malleable and might allow Kabila's network to continue.

"One possibility for today's result is that once the regime saw the catastrophic mistake Kabila had made by nominating Shadary, it scrambled to come up with a Plan B. Enter Tshisekedi," Englebert wrote in an analysis. Tshisekedi "has wavered at times in his opposition to the regime and is far from having his late father's intransigence."

By breaking away from the opposition coalition supporting Fayulu, Tshisekedi "positioned himself to bargain with the regime," Englebert wrote. "But if the history of the Kabila regime and its tight control on the state and its security apparatus are any indication, the ... new president-elect is likely to end up on the losing end of this bargain."

Western powers appeared wary.

Britain's foreign secretary said he was "very con-

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ARUBA WINE & DINE

South Korean leader urges bolder steps from North Korea, US

By **HYUNG-JIN KIM**

Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)

— South Korean President Moon Jae-in urged North Korea to take bolder disarmament measures that the United States should then reward, suggesting Thursday he wants harsh sanctions lifted so Seoul can eventually restart dormant economic cooperation projects with its neighbor. Moon said resolving the issue of the North Korea sanctions hinges on how fast Pyongyang denuclearizes and whether it receives reciprocal measures from the United States. He said that would top the agenda in an expected second summit between North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and President Donald



South Korea's President Moon Jae-in holds his New Year press conference at the presidential Blue House in Seoul Thursday, Jan. 10, 2019.

Associated Press

Trump. "North Korea knows it needs (to take) clear denuclearization steps to see international sanctions lifted and the United States also realizes that reciprocal

measures are needed to match these North Korean denuclearization steps," Moon told a news conference. Some observers believe that any sanctions relief, if

pursued before Washington is ready, could weaken South Korea's ties with its ally and complicate efforts to rid the North of its nuclear weapons. Others see the comments by Moon, a liberal who covets deep engagement with Pyongyang, as simply a symbolic bit of conciliation toward North Korea.

The two projects are South Korean tours to the North's scenic Diamond Mountain and a jointly run factory complex in the North Korean border town of Kaesong.

They were suspended in the past decade along with other similar projects amid the nuclear standoff. The two projects were considered key sources of badly needed foreign currency

for the impoverished North. "My administration will cooperate with the international community, including the United States, to resolve the remaining issues such as international sanctions as soon as possible" to get the two projects restarted, Moon said at the news conference.

Moon, who took office in 2017, has shuttled between North Korea and the United States to facilitate high-profile diplomacy that included the first Kim-Trump summit in Singapore last June. Moon's overture, however, has invited criticism from conservatives in South Korea and the United States that he's making too many concessions and helping the North try to weaken U.S.-led sanctions. □

Hong Kong Catholics mourn bishop amid political struggles

Associated Press

HONG KONG (AP)

— Hong Kong Catholics mourned the loss of their bishop with a Mass on Thursday night amid a low-key struggle among clergy over reconciliation between the Vatican and Beijing. Bishop Michael Yeung died last week from liver failure after less than two years as head of the diocese of more than 500,000 Catholics in the semi-autonomous Chinese territory.

Yeung's predecessor, Cardinal John Tong, was brought out of retirement by the Vatican to serve as interim administrator, blocking the appointment of Yeung's natural succes-



A parishioner pays his last respects in front of the picture of Bishop Michael Yeung at a vigil Mass in Hong Kong, Thursday, Jan. 10, 2019.

Associated Press

sor, Bishop Joseph Ha, the highest-ranking serving bishop who is known to be critical of the Chinese gov-

ernment. "While we obey the Vatican's appointment, I hope the bishop's successor will uphold our

values as Hong Kong Catholics and won't bow to China's demands," said John Cheung, 45, who served as altar boy to Yeung in his home parish.

Cardinal Joseph Zen, a vocal opponent of attempts by Beijing and the Vatican at rapprochement, presided at the Mass.

Zen last celebrated Mass in November to commemorate an underground priest in mainland China, Wei Heping. Wei, who founded an underground seminary, was found dead in a river about 720 kilometers (450 miles) from his home diocese of Ningxia after he had left for a catechetical meeting in northeastern

China. Authorities maintain that his death was a suicide, but his family and flock reject that conclusion. The Holy See has in recent months stepped up efforts at rapprochement with China's Communist leadership, which demands the right to appoint bishops and requires that Catholics worship only in Communist Party-recognized congregations.

Pope Francis on Monday praised the provisional agreement between the Holy See and Beijing reached last September on bishop appointments, calling it the "result of a lengthy and thoughtful institutional dialogue." □

Venezuela's Maduro celebrates 2nd term as crisis deepens

By **SCOTT SMITH**

Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP)

— Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro was sworn in to a second term Thursday amid international calls for him to step down and a devastating economic crisis, but with some long-time friends in attendance both from abroad and at home. A dozen Latin American governments and Canada in a coalition have rejected the legitimacy of Maduro's next term, and Washington has sanctioned top officials in his government.

But Cuba's President Miguel Diaz-Canel, Bolivian President Evo Morales and President Anatoli Bibilov of a breakaway province of Georgia were among the foreign leaders who attended the ceremony at the country's Supreme Court.

And while Maduro's popularity has plunged amid scarcities, hyperinflation and rising authoritarianism that have sparked a mass emigration, supporters who receive government subsidies in shantytowns continue to back the man who took over for the late Hugo Chavez.

"It's not the president's fault," said Frances Velazquez, a 43-year-old mother of two who survives on government-subsidized boxes of rice, flour and cooking oil. Velazquez blamed opportunists who drive up the prices on scarce items making life difficult for families like hers. Others, like construction worker Ramon Bermudez, have lost hope of escaping



Venezuela's President Nicolas Maduro greets Constitutional Assembly President Diosdado Cabello upon arrival to the Supreme Court for his swearing-in ceremony in Caracas, Venezuela, Thursday, Jan. 10, 2019.

Maduro's rule and planned on hunkering down at home for the inauguration. "All that's left to do is raise your hand to heaven and ask God to help us," said Bermudez, camped out on a Caracas sidewalk with hundreds of others waiting for gas. "There's nothing more."

Residents of Caracas awoke Thursday to unusually quiet streets but with a noticeably increased security presence and armed checkpoints.

State TV showed Maduro arriving at the Supreme Court where he is took the oath of office from Chief Justice Maikel Moreno. Hundreds of officials gathered inside the court's chambers cheered Maduro.

Maduro's second term extends Venezuela's socialist revolution amid widespread complaints that he has stripped Venezuela of its last vestiges of democracy.

Maduro denies that he's a dictator and often blames President Donald Trump of leading an economic war against Venezuela that's destroying the country.

"Not before, not now, nor will there ever be a dictatorship in Venezuela," Maduro said in a Wednesday news conference.

Bermudez, 52, disagrees and points out the irony of living in a nation with the world's most abundant oil reserves yet having to wait in line overnight recently to fill three canisters of natural gas to cook at home.

Oil-rich Venezuela was once among Latin America's wealthiest nations. It produced 3.5 million barrels of crude daily when Chavez took power. Output now has plummeted to less than a third of that. Critics blame years of rampant corruption and mismanagement of the state-run oil firm PDVSA.

The economic collapse has left the nation of roughly 30 million in the throes of a historic crisis.

An estimated 2.3 million Venezuelans have fled their nation's hyperinflation, food and medical shortages over the last two years, according to the United Nations. Those remaining live on a monthly minimum wage equal to less than \$5 and falling daily.

Venezuela's splintered opposition movement has failed to counter the socialist party's dominance. Maduro's government has jailed or driven into exile its most popular leaders.

Anti-government politicians successfully rallied thousands to the streets across Venezuela for four months of demonstrations in 2017, when clashes with government forces left more than 120 protesters dead and thousands injured. Maduro remained squarely in power.

In May, he declared victory in presidential election that his political opponents and many foreign nations consider illegitimate because popular opponents were banned from running and the largest anti-government parties boycotted the race.

The opposition-led Congress opened its session for the year this week, led by 35-year-old Juan Guaido, who vowed to battle against Maduro. Guaido said Maduro is "usurping the presidency."

The Trump administration has increased pressure on Maduro through financial sanctions, this week singling out powerful Venezuelan media magnate Raul Gorrin. U.S. banks are also banned from doing business with Venezuela, putting a financial stranglehold on the cash-strapped country.

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said in a statement that the United States will keep up pressure in support of the Venezuelan people. □

21 dead bodies found in north Mexico after gang clash

By **MARK STEVENSON**

Associated Press

MEXICO CITY (AP)

— Mexican authorities said Thursday that 21 bodies, some burned, have been found in the northern Mexico border state of Tamaulipas in what appears to have been a clash between drug gangs.

The bodies were found

near the remains of seven burned-out vehicles near the border town of Miguel Aleman.

President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador said the killings Wednesday appear to have been part of a dispute between gangs.

He said details would be released once all the information was gathered.

A Tamaulipas state official who was not authorized to be quoted by name said investigators had counted 21 bodies at the scene.

The area around Miguel Aleman had long been dominated by the Zetas drug cartel, which was locked in a battle for control of crime in the Rio Grande Valley with the rival

Gulf cartel. Miguel Aleman is about 50 miles (80 kilometers) west of McAllen, Texas, which was to be visited Thursday by U.S. President Donald Trump as part of his campaign for a wall or barrier along the border with Mexico.

The Zetas cartel has since splintered, and the deaths in Miguel Aleman appear

to have resulted from a dispute between the Gulf cartel and one of the Zetas factions, the Northeast cartel.

Tamaulipas has been a major conduit for drug shipments and has also been the scene of some of the worst massacres and fiercest fighting in Mexico's drug war. □

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even if they feel a bit sick." The doctor speaks seven languages: English, Dutch, German, French, Italian, Spanish and Papiamentu, meaning she can attend to almost any tourist from all over the world. "You can come in without an appointment and we have an emergency number that works 24/7, if necessary I will visit the patient where he/she is staying. We attend patients every day!" Her philosophy is as follows: As long as you enjoy what you are doing and like to help people, this profession is very rewarding." It sounds like the perfect place to heal.

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Lennert van der Poel, general manager of the Pharmacy, which is part of a Group of 5 pharmacies, points out that convenience is not their only unique asset. "We carry a wide variety of medicines from the US, but most of the medicines come from the EU. The prices in the EU are considerably lower than in the U.S." All medicine are European registered with the same standard as U.S. products. "The law in the States allows visitors to get medicines here for the use of six months and many repeated guests or time share owners do so. This saves them a lot of money. It is however mandatory to have a prescription from a local doctor", says van der Poel. Most common medicines requested by visitors are antibiotic, pain killers and anti-allergy medications.

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Creative Islander

By Thais G. Franken

“We Culture”, more than just creativity...

Maastricht – “Oh dande, nos a jega na bo porta, ay nobel!” (Oh dande, we arrived at your doorstep, happy New Year!). With the beginning of a new year, Aruba initiates its biggest cultural season of the entire year. The season of creativity, of culture, of music, of dancing, of fashion, of design, of crafting, and of pure art. A season where the Aruban community is connected through celebrating carnival. This year Aruba is celebrating its 65th anniversary, which means that this year the creativity and cultural experience will be pushed to the max. Last year, we observed at different aspects of the Cultural and Creative Industry (CCI) and its possible contribution to the Aruban society, economy and cultural scene. Carnival is one pure example of how creativity and culture does produce an economic value chain. Today as the beginning of the year, we will start at the beginning of culture and what it represents in the Aruban CCI.

According to UNESCO (2014) “culture as a sector of activity includes, but not exclusively, cultural workers, artists and other creative professionals; commercial businesses; not-for-profit firms in the arts and culture; public cultural institutions, such as museums and galleries, heritage sites, libraries etc.; education and training institutions in the arts; government agencies and ministries responsible for arts and cultural affairs; NGOs and civil society involved in cultural activity” (p. 10). Many times, when discussing culture, people assume that it is an armature sector, however, this cannot be further from the truth. Culture has been one of the most ancient sectors in history and is considered a professional and very skilled sector. It takes many stakeholders to form a cultural industry, which translates to many input and contribution.



Culture and development cannot be seen as contrasting powers, although one is aimed at tradition and one at change, but should be viewed as a holistic system approach. Before we had steelbands, now we have brass bands and live musical bands on the road. Before we had simple costumes, now are costumes are more expressive and more detailed. Before we had a couple of thousand people on the road, now we have around 15 thousand people on the road. Many times, the discussion arises when taking about culture, because it is tied to identity. When a country is filled with diversity, no culture stands on its own. The cultural value of identity is significant, whether understood at the level of a nation, region, city, town or community. Diversity is a cultural dimension of the CCI that became more prominent in recent years. As practices of globalization continue, the value of cultural diversity has been more clearly defined and the role of the CCI in promoting it has been more understood (United Nations, 2010).

When we sing “we culture”, when we read “we culture” on the mural painting in San Nicolas, what do

we think of? What does it make us feel? What can we relate to? Besides Carnival, besides Dera Gay, besides Dande, besides all other traditional Aruban practices, it is important to understand why it is important to care about our culture. Like I previously mentioned, development cannot be discontinued, it is part of life, and especially cultural life. Heritage is forever, and should be protected for the future generations after us. Generally, heritage is also embedded in the traditional cultural expressions of human creativity, manifested in cultural celebrations, festivals and folklore. In different parts of the world, native peoples and communities are keeping alive, and sometimes reviving and rescuing, old traditions by reproducing ancient crafts, using their original designs (United Nations, 2008). I was listening to an Aruban morning radio show, where they had a ‘carnivalista’ as a guest. They talked about old carnival traditions and what carnival means to the people and so on. Interestingly, I noticed that our generation knows little about the past. Many details came as a first to my understanding.

Continued on Page 15



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“We Culture”, more than just creativity...

Continued from Page 14

This directs me back at the Carnival Museum that will be opening soon on the island. The museum opened their expo “the Carnival Eupho-

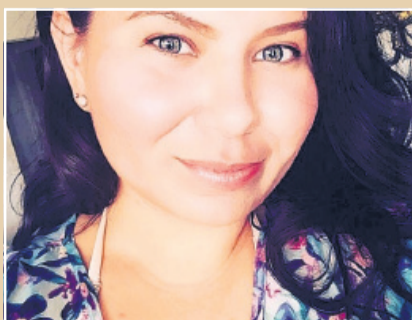


ria” last year as a token of appreciation and in celebration of the 65th anniversary of carnival on the island. This museum will serve as a method for education and awareness to our own people and those who visit the island about the carnival history and richness over the years. Carnival means more to Aruba than just partying and drinking (even though this plays a tremendous role), it means tradition, it means family, it means something sweet from the heart. For some people carnival is their life, it is their passion, it is part of their spirit. To others, especially those who do not celebrate it, it may be just a party, just a parade, just an election, just a waste of money and time. But, through all that carnival remains a huge element in the Aruban cultural panorama. We are Arubans, we are creative, we are innovators, we are artistic, but like we say it in San Nicolas “We culture”.

So, happy new year to you, and be sure to join



me this season and year, while we explore together the wonders of culture, creativity and innovation on Aruba. We will discover more about economic factors, social capital and cultural development possibilities Aruba could consider for implementing a CCI on the island. Aruba cannot look back, but only move forward. Move into the arts, move into innovative practices and strive to make it a success. Because Aruba is creative and Aruba is capable of thriving in the international art scene! □



Biography – Currently, Thais Franken is a 22-year-old Aruban student at the University of Maastricht (UM). She is studying a Master of Science in Public Policy and Human Development in collaboration with the United Nations University (UNU). Back home, on the beautiful island of Aruba she completed her Bachelor of Arts in Organization, Governance & Management (OGM) at the University of Aruba (UA). She successfully graduated and defended her thesis titled “Placing Culture and Creativity at the Heart of the Aruban Sustainable Development” on July 6th 2018. Thais is very passionate about topics such as sustainability, innovation, culture and creativity. Next to her academic interests, she enjoys reading, writing, dancing and cooking.

Honoring of the Brown's at Casa Del Mar

ORANJESTAD — Recently, Jonathan Boekhoudt of the Aruba Tourism Authority had the great pleasure to honor Aruba's loyal and friendly visitors as Goodwill Ambassador. The certificate is presented on behalf of the Minister of Tourism, as a token of appreciation to the guests who visit Aruba 20 years and more consecutively.

The honorees are Mr. Ray and Mrs. Renee Brown, residents of New York. Who have been coming to Aruba for over 20 consecutive years. Boekhoudt together with together with GM Mr. Bob Curtis and Guest Services Ms. Vanessa of Casa Del Mar presented the certificate to the honorees, and also handed over some presents and thanked them for choosing Aruba as their favorite vacation destination and as their home away from home. □



ORANJESTAD — The season of Christmas is to reflect and the management of Riu Palace Antillas used this time not only to reflect, but also to give away gifts to SGT Peppers Friends. The foundation took of the streets of Aruba many cats and dogs and to keep doing this, they need help.

SGT Peppers Friends' representatives were happy to receive the donations of Riu Palace Antillas. One more time management was so glad to contribute with the foundation. At this moment there was a lot of happiness as for the hotel as the foundation.

Riu Palace Antillas gave different gifts for dogs and cats to SGT Peppers Friends



Everyone can come by SGT Peppers Friends and

adopt a cat or dog. Volunteers of the foundation made sure that the cats and dogs received their vaccination, had their chip and were operated. SGT Peppers Friend wants to say thank you to Riu Palace Antillas for the donation of food and other gifts for the cats and dogs. For more information about how to adopt a cat or a dog, go to the website www.sgtpeppersfriends.com.

About RIU:

The international RIU chain was founded in Mallorca by the Riu family in 1953 as a small holiday firm and is still owned by the family's third generation.

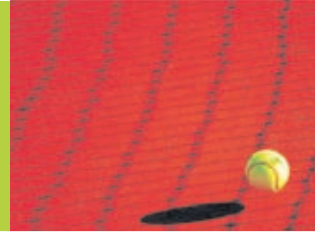
The company specializes in holiday resorts and over 70% of its establishments offer its acclaimed All Inclusive by RIU service.

With the inauguration of its first city hotel in 2010, RIU is expanding its range of products with its own line of city hotels called Riu Plaza. RIU Hotels & Resorts now has 92 hotels in 19 countries which welcome over 4 million guests a year and provide jobs for a total of 28,894 employees.

RIU is currently the world's 34th ranked chain, one of the Caribbean's most popular, the third largest in Spain in terms of revenue and the fourth largest in number of rooms. □



SPORTS



Calgary Flames' Michael Frolik, left, of the Czech Republic, celebrates his goal against the Colorado Avalanche with Matthew Tkachuk during the third period of an NHL hockey game Wednesday, Jan. 9, 2019, in Calgary, Alberta.
Associated Press

Giordano has 3 assists, Flames down Avalanche 5-3

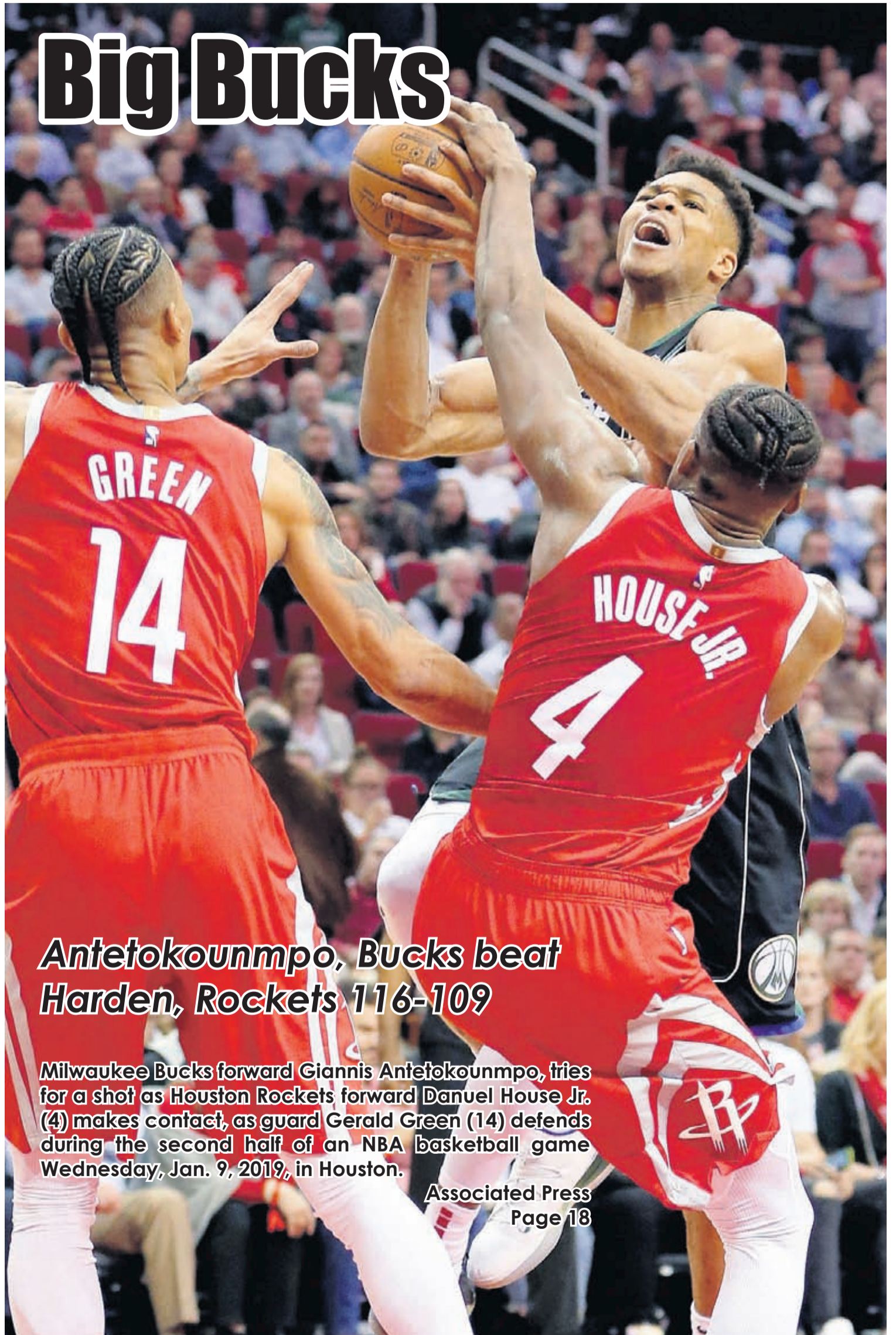
Associated Press
CALGARY, Alberta (AP) — Mark Giordano has been defying his age all season. The 35-year-old defenseman had three more assists Wednesday night and the Calgary Flames kept right on rolling with a 5-3 victory over the Colorado Avalanche.

"Just trying to put pucks on net, jump in when I can," Giordano said. "Playing on a pretty good power play with pretty good players, trying to move the puck around to those guys and get it in their hands and when you do that with those types of players, they reward you."

Mikael Backlund, Mark Jankowski, Elias Lindholm and Michael Frolik scored for Calgary (28-13-4), which is 6-1-1 in its last eight games. Matthew Tkachuk added an empty-net goal for the Flames, who have a two-point lead over Vegas atop the Pacific Division.

Continued on Page 19

Big Bucks



Antetokounmpo, Bucks beat Harden, Rockets 116-109

Milwaukee Bucks forward Giannis Antetokounmpo, tries for a shot as Houston Rockets forward Danuel House Jr. (4) makes contact, as guard Gerald Green (14) defends during the second half of an NBA basketball game Wednesday, Jan. 9, 2019, in Houston.

Associated Press
Page 18

NBA Capsules

By The Associated Press

HOUSTON (AP) — Giannis Antetokounmpo had 27 points and a season-high 21 rebounds to help the Milwaukee Bucks withstand a 42-point performance from James Harden and beat the Houston Rockets 116-109 on Wednesday night.

In a matchup of the two front-runners for MVP, Harden and his teammates were done in by a shooting slump late in the third quarter that spilled into the fourth and left them down by 15 points.

Milwaukee held a 13-point lead with about five minutes left before Houston used a 8-0 run, started by two 3-pointers from Harden, to cut it to 107-102. The Bucks got a layup from Eric Bledsoe before Harden scored the next four points to get Houston to 109-106 with 2 1/2 minutes left.

Antetokounmpo made one of two free throws to push Milwaukee's lead to four points with about 90 seconds left. Harden missed his third straight 3-pointer before Antetokounmpo added a layup on the other end to make it 112-106 with 40 seconds remaining.

Harden missed another 3 seconds later and the Bucks added four free throws down the stretch to secure their seventh victory in eight games.

It was Harden's sixth 40-point outing in the last eight games and he has scored 30 or more points in 14 straight games, which is the longest streak since Tracy McGrady did it in 2003. Harden shot 6 of 16 on 3-pointers to give him at least five in the last 11 games.

NETS 115, HAWKS 100

NEW YORK (AP) — D'Angelo Russell scored 23 points, Ed Davis grabbed a season-high 16 rebounds, and Brooklyn climbed out of an early 19-point hole to beat Atlanta. DeMarre Carroll added 17 points to help the Nets improve to 21-22 with their eighth victory in their last nine home games. They managed only 20 wins for the entire season just two years ago, but have engi-

neered a big turnaround after a slow start to this season. On Wednesday, they did the same thing in the game. They yielded 46 points in the first 15 minutes, then held the Hawks to 37 points over the next 25 minutes. Joe Harris, back after a one-game absence with a sprained right ankle, scored 16 points, as did Spencer Dinwiddie.

John Collins had 30 points and 14 rebounds for the Hawks, who may have run out of steam after their strong start while playing on the second straight night. Trae Young had 17 points and seven assists, and Jeremy Lin added 16 points.

WIZARDS 123, 76ERS 106

WASHINGTON (AP) — Bradley Beal scored 14 straight points in the fourth quarter and finished with 34 to help Washington beat Philadelphia for a split of the home-and-home set.

After Washington's 26-point third-quarter lead was cut to 12 in the fourth, Beal out-scored Philadelphia 14-5 to make it 116-95 with 4:22 left. Beal was 6 of 11 from 3-point range and 13 of 21 overall from the field.

Otto Porter Jr. added 23 points, his most since returning from a quadriceps injury this month, and Trevor Ariza had 17.

Joel Embiid had 35 points and 14 rebounds for the 76ers. They committed 23 turnovers, and had a four-game winning streak end.

Jimmy Butler added 23 points, and Ben Simmons had 15 points and 10 rebounds for Philadelphia. A night after hitting more than half of its 31 attempts from beyond the arc, Philadelphia shot 8 of 27 from 3-point range, going 3 of 20 in the first three quarters.

CELTICS 135, PACERS 108

BOSTON (AP) — Marcus Morris had 22 points and eight rebounds, Jayson Tatum had 20 points and Boston routed Indiana.

Kyrie Irving had 12 points before sitting out the fourth quarter, and the Celtics put together their highest-scoring game this season to get their fourth straight win.

Jaylen Brown scored 22



Milwaukee Bucks forward Giannis Antetokounmpo, left, protects his rebound from Houston Rockets forward PJ Tucker, right, during the first half of an NBA basketball game Wednesday, Jan. 9, 2019, in Houston.

points, Gordon Hayward had 14 and Daniel Theis added 12 points and six rebounds off the bench. Terry Rozier had 12 points and five assists. Domantas Sabonis had 20 points and seven rebounds for the Pacers. They had won seven of eight.

PELICANS 140, CAVALIERS 124

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — Anthony Davis had 38 points and 13 rebounds and New Orleans overcame a slow start to pull away from Cleveland for its third straight victory.

Cleveland has lost 11 in a row. New Orleans rookie Frank Jackson had 19 points to set a season high for a second straight game off the bench. He had 17 in a win over Memphis on Monday night. Jrue Holiday added 18 points, and Julius Randle and Nikola Mirotic had 17 each.

Jordan Clarkson led Cleveland with 21 points.

GRIZZLIES 96, SPURS 86

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP) — Marc Gasol had 26 points and 14 rebounds and Memphis Grizzlies snapped a six-game slide, beating San Antonio.

Mike Conley had 15 points and six assists for Memphis, and Jaren Jackson Jr. and JaMychal Green scored 12 points each.

Marco Belinelli and Bryn

Forbes scored 14 points apiece for the Spurs, who ended a five-game winning streak. LaMarcus Aldridge and Patty Mills had 13 points each for San Antonio.

MAVERICKS 104, SUNS 94

DALLAS (AP) — Luka Doncic scored 30 points and Dallas ended a seven-game losing streak against Phoenix. The 19-year-old rookie put the Mavericks ahead for good with a 3-pointer early in the second half before getting one of his five assists on a jump-pass from nearly half court out of a double team to DeAndre Jordan for a dunk as Dallas built its lead to nine going to the fourth quarter.

T.J. Warren scored 20 points for the Suns. Scoring leader Devin Booker missed the Kings game and was out again in Dallas with back spasms.

JAZZ 106, MAGIC 93

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — Donovan Mitchell had 33 points and seven assists and Utah rallied to beat Orlando.

Joe Ingles added 16 points and seven assists, and Rudy Gobert had 12 points and 14 rebounds. Utah improved to 21-21, winning for the third time in four games.

D.J. Augustin had 23 points and six assists for Orlando. The Magic ended a six-game trip with four straight

losses.

LAKERS 113, PISTONS 100

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Kyle Kuzma scored a career-high 41 points and the Lakers beat the Pistons to improve to 3-5 without injured LeBron James.

Kuzma had 22 points in the third quarter, hitting four 3-pointers to get the crowd on its feet and scoring on consecutive goaltending calls. He left with 1:07 to play and put a wrap around his midsection with a pack stuffed in the back. The second-year forward had scoring runs of 10 and six points in the quarter, when the Lakers led by 16. Detroit's Blake Griffin, averaging a career-high 25.3 points, was held to 16 points and no rebounds.

TRAIL BLAZERS 124, BULLS 112

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — CJ McCollum had 24 points and the Trail Blazers pulled away in the final quarter to send the Bulls to their fifth straight loss.

Jusuf Nurkic had 18 points and eight rebounds but got into foul trouble and came up just short of his fifth straight game with 20 or more points. Portland has won three straight and five of its last six games.

Wendell Carter Jr. had 22 points to lead the Bulls in the first of a five-game road trip. □

Associated Press

Calgary Flames vs. Colorado Avalanche

Continued from Page 17

Giordano had the primary assist on Lindholm's power-play goal that broke a 2-all tie at 12:57 of the second period and Frolik's deflection that made it 4-2 half-way through the third.

"He's one of the best I've ever met. I couldn't be happier that I have a chance to play with him," Frolik said. "He's been unbelievable, especially this year. He's really driving the bus on the back end now." Johnny Gaudreau added two assists for the Flames to extend his point streak to six games.

Giordano has 303 career assists, moving him past Joe Nieuwendyk into fifth on the franchise list.

Nathan MacKinnon ran his point streak to eight games with a goal for Colorado

(20-16-8). Erik Johnson and Mikko Rantanen also scored as the slumping Avalanche dropped to 1-6-2 in their last nine games.

"We're not finding ways to win right now, whether it's a save at a key time or a goal at a key time," said Gabriel Landeskog, who fired 12 shots on David Rittich — the most by an NHL player in a game this season. "We're generating plenty of chances and we allowed only 16 shots. When you do that you've got to be able to win."

Rittich, sharp all night, made 32 saves to improve to 16-4-3.

"He was awesome, again," Giordano said. "It's the timely saves that are huge, to be honest. When you're tied or you're up one and he's keeping that same score line. He's been doing



Colorado Avalanche's Tyson Jost, left, and Calgary Flames' T.J. Brodie watch as the puck bounces up in front of them during the first period of an NHL hockey game Wednesday, Jan. 9, 2019, in Calgary, Alberta.

it all year and again, another big night by him." Avalanche goalie Semyon Varlamov, tested only 15 times, fell to 11-9-5.

"We have to help them more," Rantanen said, defending Colorado's goal-

tending. "It's been our problem lately. Not just the last two games, even before that. We score enough goals to win, but we can't give up seven or five goals every night."

Colorado has been strug-

gling to kill off penalties. Meanwhile, the Flames' penalty kill had a big night, going 4 for 4 against an Avalanche team that came into the game ranked fifth with the man advantage.

"Our PK, the role is to shut it down so I think we did a pretty good job of that and trying to halt their momentum," said Jankowski, who scored his seventh goal.

Frolik's goal at 9:14 of the third, when he deflected in Giordano's point shot, ended up the game-winner after Rantanen scored with 38 seconds remaining and the goalie pulled.

Calgary got off to a fast start when Backlund buried James Neal's rebound at 5:34. The Flames doubled their lead five minutes later on Jankowski's seventh.

But the Avalanche got back to even before the period ended. □

Al-Attiyah, Brabec lead Dakar Rally after dominating stage 4



Driver Sebastien Loeb, of France, and co-driver Daniel Elena, of Monaco, race their Peugeot during stage four of the Dakar Rally between Arequipa and Moquegua, Peru, Thursday, Jan. 10, 2019.

Associated Press

LIMA, Peru (AP) — Driver Nasser Al-Attiyah and rider Ricky Brabec dominated the fourth stage of the Dakar Rally on Thursday to lead their categories overall.

Al-Attiyah strengthened his lead to nearly nine minutes over Stephane Peterhansel after outdueling the Frenchman by nearly two minutes on the split 351-kilometer route of valleys and fesh-fesh — fine dust — between Arequipa and Tacna.

Associated Press

"It was very important to catch Stephane and stay with him all the way," Al-Attiyah said.

Three decades of racing the world's toughest rally helped Peterhansel endure the fesh-fesh.

Nani Roma was nearly 21 minutes back in third, followed by Jakub Przygonski (22 minutes), Yazeed Al Rajhi (nearly 25 minutes) and Sebastien Loeb (50 minutes), who suffered three punctures and came to the finish on a punctured tire. □

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Djokovic, Federer on opposite sides of Australian Open draw

By JOHN PYE

AP Sports Writer

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP)

— Roger Federer and Novak Djokovic are aiming for the same record from opposite sides of the draw, leaving open the prospect of them playing in the final for a seventh Australian Open title.

Top-ranked Djokovic and defending champion Federer enter the season-opening major equal with Roy Emerson, who won his six Australian singles championships between 1961-67, before the Open era.

Serena Williams already has won seven Australian Open singles titles, and is a strong contender to add another after skipping last year's tournament while on leave after having a baby. Now seeded 16th, Williams was drawn into the same section Thursday as No. 1-ranked Simona Halep, the runner-up last year. The pair could meet in the fourth round.

Djokovic starts at the top of the draw and will open against a qualifier. Things could get much tougher quickly, with a potential second-round meeting



Serbia's Novak Djokovic serves to Britain's Andy Murray during a practice match on Margaret Court Arena ahead of the Australian Open tennis championships in Melbourne, Australia, Thursday, Jan. 10, 2019.

against wild-card entry Jo-Wilfried Tsonga, who he beat in the 2008 Australian final, and with Denis Shapovalov in the same section. Eighth-seeded Kei Nishikori, who opened the season with a title in Brisbane, is a potential quarterfinal rival and No. 4 Alexander Zverev looms as a semifinal opponent if both players advance that far.

Federer, who has won the last two at Melbourne Park

in a career resurgence, is in the bottom half of the draw with second-ranked Rafael Nadal, who is returning from an injury layoff.

Aiming for a 21st Grand Slam trophy and a 100th career singles title, Federer will open against Denis Istomin. And with No. 6 Marin Cilic in the same quarter, there's potential for a rematch of the 2018 final a few rounds early.

"I'm so close, I'll give it

a go," Federer said. "If I made 100 at the Australian I'd take it, I'd gladly accept it — and I'll give it all I have."

But, he noted before heading out to practice after attending the tournament draw with his trophy, "the moment you find out the draw, that's when you shift your focus to the first round and only the first round."

Murray won only two games in an incomplete practice

match with Djokovic at Melbourne Park, showing signs he's still not fully fit after spending most of the last 18 months off the tour. Murray played at the season-opening Brisbane International last week, where he won his first-round match against James Duckworth but lost in straight sets to Daniil Medvedev in the second, limping between points and admitting he's still dealing with his troublesome right hip.

One of the most intriguing men's first-round matches features 2016 Wimbledon finalist Milos Raonic against mercurial Australian Nick Kyrgios, who is unseeded after his ranking slid from 13 into the 50s, but has tour-level wins over Federer, Nadal and Djokovic to his credit.

Williams will face Tatjana Maria in the first round, and could meet either Genie Bouchard or Peng Shuai in the second. Halep has drawn another first-round opponent against Kaia Kanepi, who beat her at the same stage at last year's U.S. Open, and a possible third rounder against unseeded Venus Williams. □

Associated Press

World gold medalist McCallum headlines American Cup field

By WILL GRAVES

AP Sports Writer

Grace McCallum is getting a showcase at the American Cup. The youngest member of the U.S. women's gymnastics team that won a gold medal at the 2018 world championships headlines the field for the annual exhibition, which will be held March 2 at the Greensboro Coliseum in North Carolina. The 16-year-old McCallum will be joined by 2018 U.S. junior champion Leanne Wong, who will be making her senior debut at the first major elite event of 2019.

"It's a special part of our schedule and it is a big deal as to which athletes go into competition," said Tom Forster, the high-performance coordinator for the women's national team. "Sometimes it's about showing the



In this Aug. 19, 2018, file photo, Grace McCallum competes on the uneven bars at the U.S. Gymnastics Championships in Boston.

very best and sometimes it's about giving an opportunity to new seniors."

The time the American Cup will do both. McCallum, who is from Isanti, Minnesota, finished fourth in the all-around at the 2018 U.S. championships and

competed in three events during team qualifying and two events during the team final at worlds. Forster pointed to McCallum's youth and her success under pressure at the world championships as proof she was worthy of a spot. For-

Associated Press

ster said he first broached the topic of the American Cup at the world championships in Doha, Qatar, and the other members of the team — including Olympic and world champion Simone Biles, 2017 world champion Morgan Hurd and Riley McCusker — all wanted more down time to upgrade a portion of their routines. All three will make their 2019 debuts later in the year.

"They could see what was happening at worlds and they knew that they would like to change a couple of things in their routines," Forster said. "And when you're at their level, changes don't take weeks, they take months." The competition — which features 16 gymnastics (eight men, eight women) from around the world — will also be

a chance for Wong, a 15-year-old from Overland Park, Kansas, to go up against seniors for the first time. "She's a quick athlete and yet she's beautiful," Forster said. "She doesn't have to rely on adrenaline of competition to give her more bounce. She's just technically sound so she can just basically not rely on adrenaline at all. Not all athletes can do that. One of the benefits of Leanne is that she's very consistent." The rest of the women's field includes three-time world medalist Mai Murakami of Japan, 2017 world silver medalist Ellie Black of Canada, Lu Yu-fei of China, Celia Serber of France, Kim Bui of Germany, Sanna Veerman of the Netherlands and to-be-determined gymnast from South Korea. □



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Vonn not obsessing over WCup record; 'I don't need 87 wins'

By ERIC WILLEMSSEN
Associated Press

Lindsey Vonn doesn't want health or history to dictate when her storied career ends.

With yet another knee injury behind her and a major record within reach, the three-time Olympic medalist is determined to retire on her terms.

Vonn is ready to return from injury and resume her pursuit of the World Cup wins record. She is four victories shy of Ingemar Stenmark's 86 victories, making her the only skier to even get close to the Swedish great. Matching that mark is a goal for Vonn, but she doesn't want it to become an obsession before she retires later this year.

"The record won't define me, whether I get it or not," Vonn told The Associated Press in a telephone interview Wednesday. "I don't need 87 wins to be able to continue the work of my foundation, to help kids, inspire people to be healthy and active and be



In this Feb. 4, 2018, file photo, United States' Lindsey Vonn celebrates on the podium after winning an alpine ski, women's world Cup downhill race, in Garmisch Partenkirchen, Germany.

positive and strive to reach their dreams and goals. I don't need that record to accomplish those things. Once I retire, 87 won't really matter anymore.

"It's not going to change the way I leave the sport."

The 34-year-old will retire after the season with a long list of accomplishments. She won downhill gold

at the 2010 Vancouver Games, eight World Cup season titles in downhill, five more in super-G, and has four overall World Cup championships.

She was a good bet to catch Stenmark, too, before hyperextending her left knee and spraining a ligament while training in November. She was set to

return this weekend, but the downhill and super-G in St. Anton, Austria, were canceled because of heavy snowfall.

Vonn had hoped to use St. Anton as a stepping stone to the speed events in Cortina d'Ampezzo, Italy, on Jan. 19-20. Vonn injured the knee a week before her scheduled first race in

Lake Louise, Alberta. She had planned to retire after this season, but now plans to compete at Lake Louise once more in November 2019.

"My knee feels really good, surprisingly a lot better than I thought," Vonn said. "I was on crutches for a while, and it just took a bit to get the strength back. I feel really strong when I am skiing and don't feel any pain in my left knee."

Vonn's right knee is permanently damaged from previous crashes, and she wears braces on both legs. The 34-year-old has had to fight back from injuries many times: torn ACLs, fractures near her left knee, broken ankle, sliced right thumb, a concussion and more. She's limited now to about three runs per day, and her achy body can't handle the workload of other skiers.

"Unfortunately, my body can't take it anymore. I had too many surgeries," Vonn said. "It's pretty painful to ski every day. □"

3-time Olympic champion Yoshida retires from wrestling

By JIM ARMSTRONG
AP Sports Writer

TOKYO (AP) — Three-time Olympic wrestling champion Saori Yoshida retired officially on Thursday, saying it's time for the next generation of Japanese wrestlers to feature at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.

The 36-year-old Yoshida, who also won 13 consecutive world championships, spoke before a packed news conference at a hotel in central Tokyo.

"I realize I have done everything I can as a wrestler and it's now time to let the next generation of wrestlers



Japan's Olympic wrestling gold medalist Saori Yoshida, right, and her mother Yukiyo Yoshida, left, pose for photographers after her announcement of her retirement from competitive wrestling in Tokyo Thursday, Jan. 10, 2019.

Associated Press

take over," Yoshida said. Yoshida had been taking time away from competition since the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Olympics, where she fell short of a fourth straight Olympic gold medal and settled for silver. She has been serving as a coach for the Japan team in the lead-up to the Tokyo Olympics.

She received the People's Honor Award in 2012 after surpassing Aleksandr Karelin's record for consecutive world titles.

The Russian great won three Olympic gold medals and nine world champion-

ships from 1988-99. Yoshida competed for most of her career in the 55-kilogram class but dropped to the 53kg event for the first time at the Olympics in Rio after the sport's governing body shifted the weight divisions. "After Rio, I had the desire to compete in Tokyo," Yoshida said.

"My father told me it's important to know when to retire. I knew I would need my best efforts to perform well in Tokyo and when I saw how motivated the younger wrestlers coming up were I knew the time was right." □

PSG coach Tuchel must deliver in Europe after domestic loss

By **JEROME PUGMIRE**
AP Sports Writer

PARIS (AP) — It looks like Paris Saint-Germain coach Thomas Tuchel has no choice but to deliver Champions League success.

There's one month to go before PSG faces Manchester United in the last 16, which gives Tuchel some time to get his tactics right against Ole Gunnar Solskjaer's resurgent side.

Judging by the manner of Wednesday's 2-1 defeat at home to strugglers Guingamp in the French League Cup quarterfinals, he will need to be wise and ruthless in his decision-making over the next few weeks.

Although it was only PSG's second defeat of the season it was as humiliating as it was unexpected and, if he was watching on TV in chilly northwest England, Solskjaer may well have gone to sleep with a smile on his face.

Momentum is shifting back in United's favor following a dismal start to the season under then-coach Jose Mourinho, while PSG is com-



In this Tuesday, Dec. 10, 2018 file photo, PSG coach Thomas Tuchel gestures during a press conference prior to the Champions League group C soccer match between Red Star and Paris Saint Germain, in Belgrade, Serbia.

ing under some pressure after making a blistering start to its French league campaign.

Goals were flying in from everywhere, Kylian Mbappe and Neymar were scoring for fun, and Tuchel re-

ceived high praise for managing his stars with a feel-good approach rather than a firmer and unpopular one employed by his predecessor Unai Emery.

Tuchel's stock among fans and players grew further

after his side beat Liverpool 2-1 in the Champions League, effectively preventing the possibility of a group-stage exit.

The euphoria faded when PSG drew back-to-back league games away to

Associated Press

Bordeaux and Strasbourg. Neither of those sides has stars, but their coaches frustrated PSG by playing an intensive pressing game depriving them of space and forcing them into errors. It's a simple but effective formula when done right, as Guingamp also showed and Solskjaer will doubtless have noted. The sloppy defeat to Guingamp, with three penalties conceded in the second half, raised alarming questions about a lack of concentration.

With insufficient protection from midfield, PSG's defense was far too easily breached, prompting rash mistakes from defenders inside the penalty area. Thilo Kehrer, a promising young German defender, has given away four of the 10 penalties PSG has conceded this season. There were no excuses at either end as a glittering forward line comprising of Mbappe, Neymar and Angel Di Maria — costing a combined 465 million euros in transfer fees (\$535 million) — fluffed chances against the side last in the first division. □

Grandal, Brewers agree to \$18.25M, 1-year deal

By **RONALD BLUM**
AP Baseball Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Catcher Yasmani Grandal and the Milwaukee Brewers have agreed to an \$18.25 million, one-year contract, a person familiar with the negotiations tells The Associated Press.

The person spoke on condition of anonymity Wednesday night because the agreement, first reported by The Athletic, was subject to a successful physical.

Grandal turned down a \$17.9 million qualifying offer from the NL champion Los Angeles Dodgers in November. He would be eligible for free agency again after this year's World Series. Now 30, Grandal was an All-Star in his first season with the Dodgers in 2015. He hit .241 this year with 24 homers and 68 RBIs as Los Angeles won its second straight NL pennant. He made \$7.9



In this Sept. 12, 2018, file photo, Los Angeles Dodgers' Yasmani Grandal advances to second on an error by Cincinnati Reds second baseman Scooter Gennett during a baseball game in Cincinnati.

million. Grandal has a .240 big

league career average with 113 home runs in sev-

en seasons. He would supplant Manny Pina and Erik

Associated Press

Katz, who combined to get the most games behind the plate for Milwaukee last season.

He is the second player to reach agreement among the six who turned down qualifying offers. Pitcher Patrick Corbin agreed to a \$140 million, six-year contract with Washington.

Outfielders Bryce Harper and A.J. Pollock remain on the market along with left-hander Dallas Keuchel and closer Craig Kimbrel.

Born in Cuba, Grandal moved with his family to Florida, played for the University of Miami and was taken by Cincinnati with the 12th overall pick in the 2010 amateur draft.

He was traded to San Diego in December 2011 as part of the deal that brought pitcher Mat Latos to the Padres, then made his big league debut the following June. □

Where have all the NFL's black coaches gone?

By **TIM DAHLBERG**
AP Sports Writer

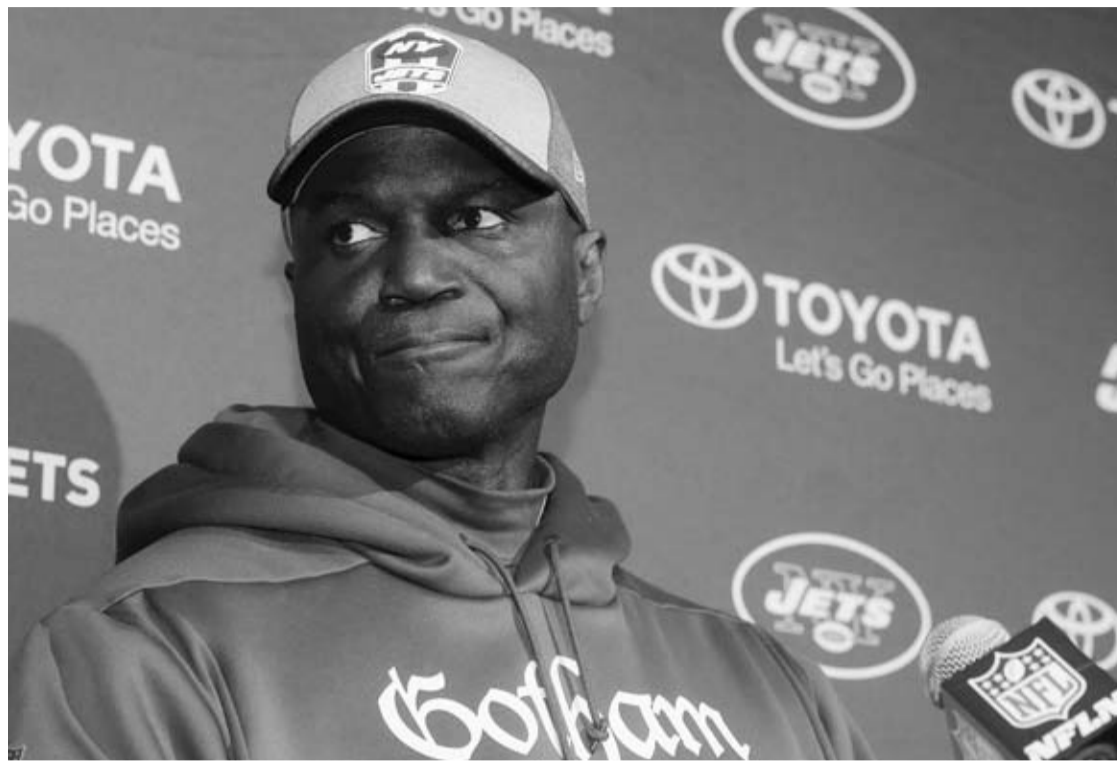
Where have all the black coaches gone? To the unemployment line, at least in the NFL. Five of the eight coaches fired over — and since — the last season were black, and so far none of them has been re-hired as head coaches in the league.

That leaves two African-American coaches still standing among 32 NFL teams. And in a league where more than two thirds of players are black that's not nearly enough.

The news Wednesday that the Denver Broncos were hiring Vic Fangio as head coach and the New York Jets were going with Adam Gase as their new coach means six of the eight teams looking for new coaches have found their man.

And so far none of the new hires have been minorities. That's not a new problem in the NFL, of course. It's also one the league has addressed with the Rooney Rule that ensures minority candidates are interviewed for any head coaching openings and other front office positions. The rule was a step forward, and for a long time it seemed to be working. To make sure, the NFL just last month announced changes to strengthen it.

The changes were hailed as a breakthrough at the time



New York Jets head coach Todd Bowles speaks to the media following an NFL football game against the New England Patriots, Sunday, Dec. 30, 2018, in Foxborough, Mass.

by former Giants linebacker Harry Carson, executive director of the Fritz Pollard Alliance, which promotes diversity in NFL coaching and executive ranks. They came after a season in which seven coaches were replaced — and only one of the replacements was black.

"After last season's hiring cycle, something had to be done," Carson said. "These enhancements should strengthen the rule and ensure that it applies as intended and truly gives candidates of color a fair chance."

And if last year was a step

back from true diversity, this year has started off even worse.

Of the last 13 coaching hires in the NFL over two seasons, the only minority hire has been Steve Wilks — and he was fired by the Arizona Cardinals after just one year. The only two black coaches left in the NFL — which at its peak in 2011 had eight coaches of color — are Anthony Lynn of the Chargers and Mike Tomlin of the Steelers.

"I liked it better when there was eight and not just two," said Richard Lapchick, director of the Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport

at Central Florida. "But I do think there is a cyclical nature to this and that may be part of it."

Lapchick, who authors annual reports on the level of diversity in all the major professional leagues, said the NFL experienced a similar dip in the hiring of black coaches after the 2011 season into 2014. Then the hiring picked up again to the point in the last two years when there were eight coaches of color — including Panthers coach Ron Rivera, who is Hispanic. He's hoping that this dip may also be short-lived, while others believe promis-

ing black coaches may get more opportunities if the Rooney Rule was expanded to include coordinator positions, too.

"Am I concerned there are (two) coaches of color?" Lapchick asked. "Of course, and if I hadn't just gone through it in my head looking at 2011 and the three years after that I would have been deeply discouraged by what I saw at the end of this season."

Just why the number of minorities is down depends on who you're talking to, though it's certainly not for a lack of qualified candidates.

There are black coaches on the staffs of almost every NFL team that potentially could run teams just as well as any of the coaches hired so far this postseason. It doesn't help that a few of the more recent hires are head scratching choices, at least to those outside the organizations.

Arizona reached into the college ranks to tab Kliff Kingsbury, as its new head coach.

That by itself was unusual since Kingsbury had a losing record at Texas Tech and has never coached in the NFL.

And Tampa Bay hired former Cardinals coach Bruce Arians, who is coming out of a one-year retirement at the age of 66 to take the Bucs job. □

Spanish league's 2nd-division games to be shown on YouTube



Real Madrid's Sergio Ramos jumps with Real Sociedad's Asier Illarramendi during a Spanish La Liga soccer match between Real Madrid and Real Sociedad at the Santiago Bernabeu stadium in Madrid, Spain, Sunday, Jan. 6, 2019.

Associated Press

Associated Press

MADRID (AP) — The Spanish league says it will begin broadcasting second-division games on YouTube.

The league said on Thursday that its YouTube channel will provide the matches with live English commentary in more than 150 countries in "major markets" in Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas, "bringing the competition to large global territories where no previous transmission

had been in place."

The broadcasts will begin with Friday night's match between Cadiz and Granada.

All 11 games in each round will be broadcast by the channel, which will also show a 50-minute highlights program.

In Spain, matches will continue to be shown only on local television.

"The way we consume live sports is being changed by a new generation of online broadcasters, and we are

committed to using such channels to extend the appeal of our competitions," said Melcior Soler, director of the league's audiovisual department. Last year, La Liga reached a deal with Facebook to broadcast every first-division match on the social media network in eight southeast Asian countries.

The league's 22-team second division includes clubs such as Deportivo La Coruna, Real Zaragoza and Malaga. □

CES 2019: A high-tech spin for the old-school peephole

By **MATT O'BRIEN**
JOSEPH PISANI

Associated Press

LAS VEGAS (AP) — The CES 2019 gadget show is revving up in Las Vegas. Here are the latest findings and observations from Associated Press reporters on the ground.

DING-DONG, THE PEEPHOLE IS RINGING

Ring is giving the old-school peephole a high-tech spin. The company unveiled a new internet-connected video doorbell that fits into most peepholes. The new device is aimed at apartment dwellers or college students who want a video doorbell, but may not be allowed to install one next to their doors.

Amazon bought Ring last year, giving it a shot at competing better with Google's Nest, which also makes cameras and doorbells. Privacy experts have long sounded the alarm on Wi-Fi connected cameras and how video is stored. Amazon recently filed a patent application for a facial-recognition system involving home security cameras, which would allow multiple cameras to create composites of faces to identify people who may be trying to burglarize a house. It doesn't appear Ring uses facial recognition yet, as Nest already does, though Ring may add such features over time. Amazon did not respond to a request for comment.

Ring's Door View Cam will go on sale in March for \$199. Ring's new device will still act as a peephole, but will also send alerts to user's smartphones when the doorbell is pressed or someone knocks the door.

EYE OF THE BEHOLDER?

The makers of a robotic "personal massager" for women won a prestigious CES award. Then organizers took it away.

Its maker, the startup Lora DiCarlo, was also banned from exhibiting on the show floor (though it's in Las Vegas at a separate media event).

The show's organizer, the Consumer Technology As-



The new Door View Cam is on display at the Ring booth before CES International, Monday, Jan. 7, 2019, in Las Vegas.

sociation, said in an email to Lora DiCarlo that it reserved the right to disqualify any entry "deemed by CTA in their sole discretion to be immoral, obscene, indecent, profane or not in keeping with CTA's image." An independent panel of judges had selected Lora DiCarlo's Ose vibrator last fall to win a CES 2019 Innovation Honoree Award in the robotics and drone category. Gary Shapiro, CTA's president and CEO, apologized in a separate letter and said the company should have been told it's "ineligible for entry." CTA declined to provide further comment to The Associated Press on why

the product was ineligible. Ose's makers say it's sexism, noting that "a literal sex doll for men launched on the floor at CES in 2018." Lora Haddock, the CEO of Lora DiCarlo, says that makes for a double standard at the tech show already under fire for not including enough women.

SHADES THAT TEXT

Smart glasses haven't been a hit, but at least one startup still sees them in our future. A company called North will be delivering its \$999 smart glasses to customers in the coming weeks. Called Focals by North, they pair with a smartphone and show text messages, weather and

Associated Press

mapping directions on the glass that only the wearer sees. Users also need to wear a ring with a joystick on their index finger, so they can flip through messages or respond with their thumb. It can also be controlled using the built-in Amazon Alexa voice assistant, but the joystick has to be pressed down for it to start listening.

Getting people to buy smart glasses has been a challenge — Google famously stopped selling its smart glasses to the public about four years ago.

Aaron Grant, North's co-founder, says his product is different because they are designed to look like regu-

lar frames. And prescription lenses can be added. But there's a small projector on one side, and the frames on the side are slightly thicker.

FRESH BREAD, NO BAKER

That smell wafting through the CES show? Freshly baked bread.

Wilkinson Baking Co. unveiled a 22-square-foot machine that can bake 10 loaves of bread every hour — no baker needed. But a human is needed to dump the ingredients into the machine, which then mixes them, forms the dough and starts baking. Someone also needs to slice the bread, although the company says it's working on a way for the machines to do that, too. The BreadBot, as it's called, is being pitched to supermarkets as a way to deliver fresh bread to shoppers who are increasingly worried about the ingredients in their foods. The machine is covered in glass, so customers can watch bread get made. They then select the loaf they want on a touch screen, sort of like a vending machine.

Three local supermarkets are already testing it. The company says a couple of big chains have agreed to try it out soon, but it won't say which.

SMART BRA

Is your bra dumb? An underwear company is pitching a solution to an age-old problem for women: finding a bra that actually fits.

In the past, women could get help from an expert human in finding their right size. A simple measuring tape wouldn't do, as it doesn't reflect other factors such as the shape of a woman's breasts. But these old-school "bra fitters" are hard to find these days.

To address that, a company called Soma has added some circuits to a brassiere and connected it to an app. The Soma InnoFit has four lines of circuitry hooked up to a circuit board in the back, which then connects to an app via Bluetooth. The smart \$59 bra then recommends a bra — from Soma's line, of course. □



In this Tuesday, Jan. 8, 2019, image made from a video, the Soma InnoFit bra is displayed at CES International in Las Vegas.

Associated Press

Stocks slip as US-China trade talks end; Macy's nosedives

By **MARLEY JAY**
Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — A rally in global stock markets faded Thursday after U.S. and Chinese officials wrapped up three days of trade talks in Beijing without any significant breakthrough. Retailers sank after Macy's and Kohl's said sales over the holidays were worse than expected, and airlines slumped after American gave a disappointing revenue forecast.

The losses threaten to end a four-day winning streak for U.S. indexes. Oil prices also turned lower after an eight-day string of gains. **KEEPING SCORE:** The S&P 500 index gave up 17 points, or 0.7 percent, to 2,567 as of 10 a.m. Eastern time. The Dow Jones Industrial Average lost 125 points, or 0.5 percent, to 23,753. The Nasdaq composite dropped 63 points, or 0.9 percent, to 6,893. The Russell 2000 index of smaller-company stocks fell 12 points, or 0.9 percent, to 1,426.

BLACK EYE-DAY: Macy's said holiday sales slowed in the middle of December and the department store cut its annual profit and sales forecasts. Its stock plunged 17.8 percent to



In this Jan. 3, 2019, file photo specialist Anthony Rinaldi, left, works at his post on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange. Associated Press

\$26.07 in heavy trading. Kohl's also reported weaker sales growth and it fell 9.1 percent to \$63.51. Macy's announcement came as a surprise because investor expectations for the holiday season have been high. Unemployment is the lowest it's been in decades, wages are rising and consumer confidence is high, while gas prices dropped late last year. But shoppers may have been less willing to splurge because the stock market fell dramatically in December, and shortly afterward the federal government went into a partial shutdown that is still ongoing.

Victoria's Secret maker L

Brands fell 7.9 percent to \$25.99 and Capri Holdings, the parent company of Michael Kors and Versace, lost 4.6 percent to \$39.94 while Gap shed 4.3 percent to \$24.95. Amazon lost 1.7 percent to \$1,630.

STUCK ON THE RUNWAY: Airlines skidded after American said its fourth-quarter revenue growth at the low end of its projections. Delta gave a similarly disappointing forecast a week ago. American fell 9.9 percent to \$30.10 while Delta lost 3.6 percent to \$46.74 and United dropped 6 percent to \$78.69.

U.S.-CHINA TALKS: Stock markets have jumped over the last two weeks as in-

vestors grew more hopeful that the U.S. and China will resolve the trade tensions that have been brewing over the past year. The just-concluded talks in Beijing helped the U.S. market rally for four days in a row, its longest streak since mid-September.

But as those talks ended, it's not clear what the next steps will be or when they will talk next.

The U.S. Trade Representative said topics at the meeting included China's pledge to buy more energy and agricultural products and manufactured goods from the U.S. But that's a relatively minor area of disagreement.

The U.S. wants China to change its technology policy to reduce cyber theft of trade secrets as well as more access to the Chinese market for non-Chinese companies and increased protection for foreign patents and copyrights. The U.S. Trade Representative gave no hint of progress on those issues.

BONDS: Bond prices rose. The yield on the 2-year Treasury note fell to 2.53 percent from 2.55 percent. The yield on the longer-term Treasury note fell to

2.70 percent from 2.72 percent. **ENERGY:** Oil prices fell back after hitting their highest levels in almost a month. U.S. crude fell 0.9 percent to \$51.87 a barrel in New York and Brent crude fell 0.9 percent to \$60.87 a barrel in London. □

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US average mortgage rates fall; 30-year at 4.45 percent

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. long-term mortgage rates continued to fall this week, reaching their lowest levels in nine months. The decline in home borrowing rates in recent weeks has been a spur to prospective homebuyers, reflected in a spike in applications

for mortgages. Mortgage buyer Freddie Mac says the average rate on the benchmark 30-year, fixed-rate mortgage dipped to 4.45 percent this week from 4.51 percent last week. Rates remain far above last year's levels, however. The key 30-year rate averaged 3.99 percent a year ago.

The average rate for 15-

3.89 percent from 3.99 percent last week. □

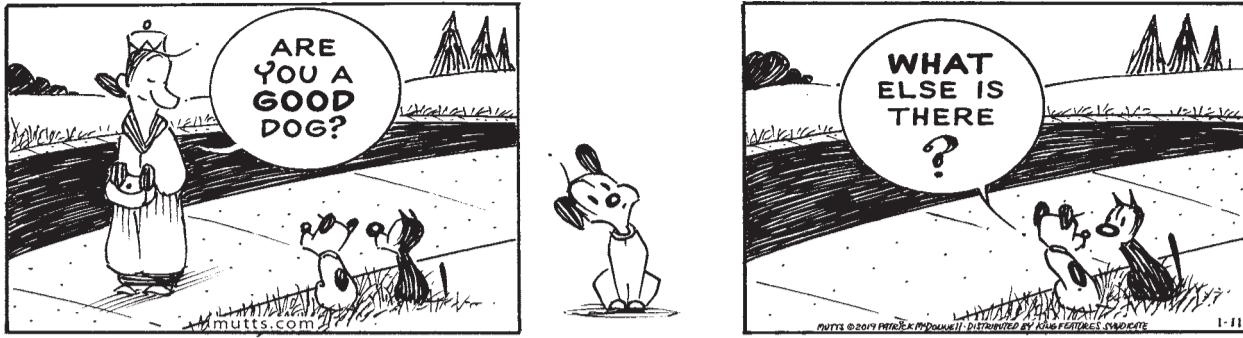


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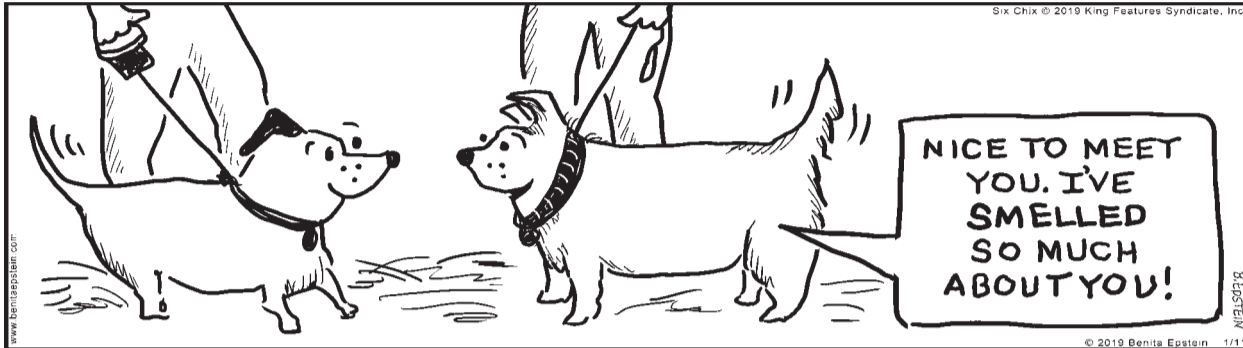
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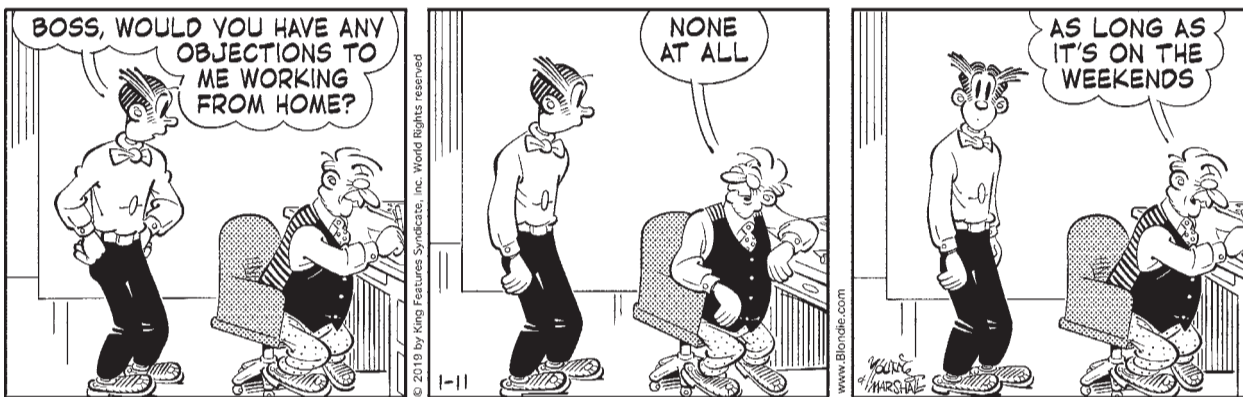
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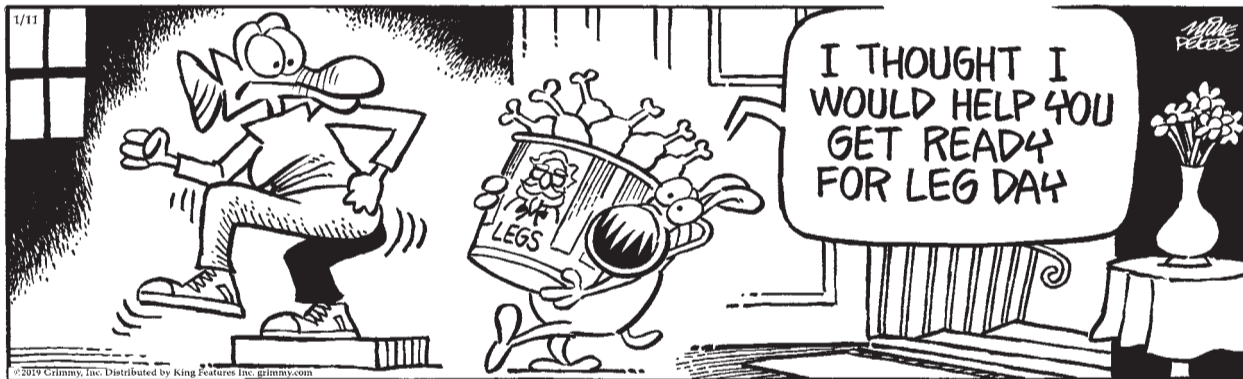
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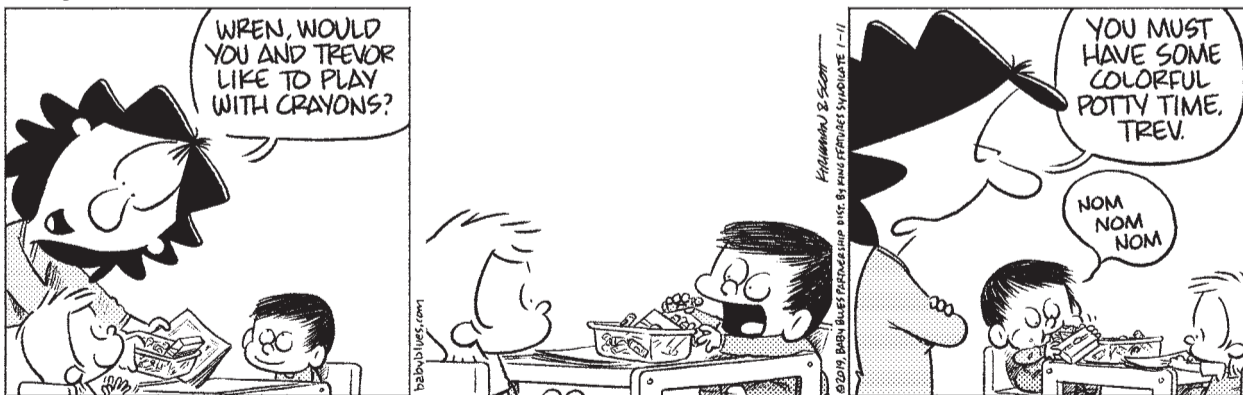
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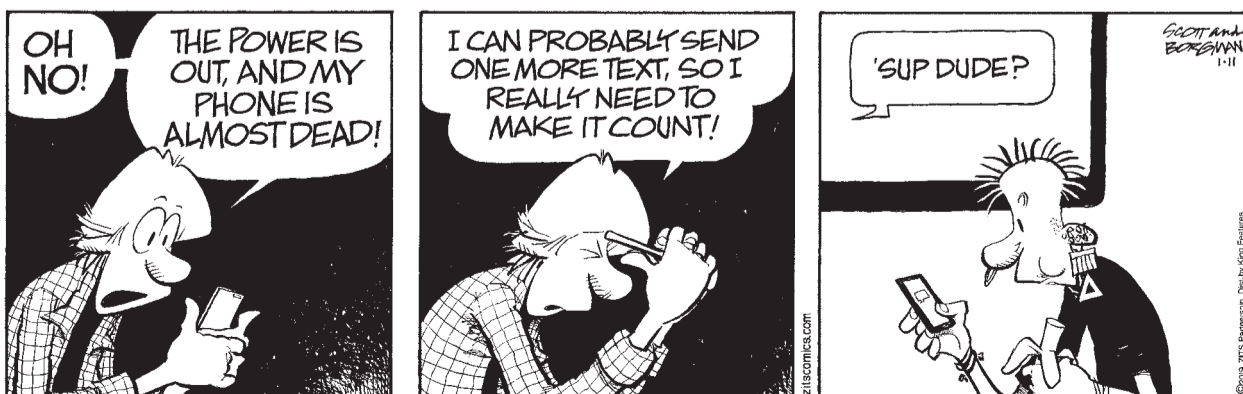
Mother Goose & Grimm



Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

	6					9		
2	1					3		8
	7			2			1	
			8		2			
		5				4		
			1		7			
	4			9			8	
6		8				5		7
	2						3	

Difficulty Level ★★★★★

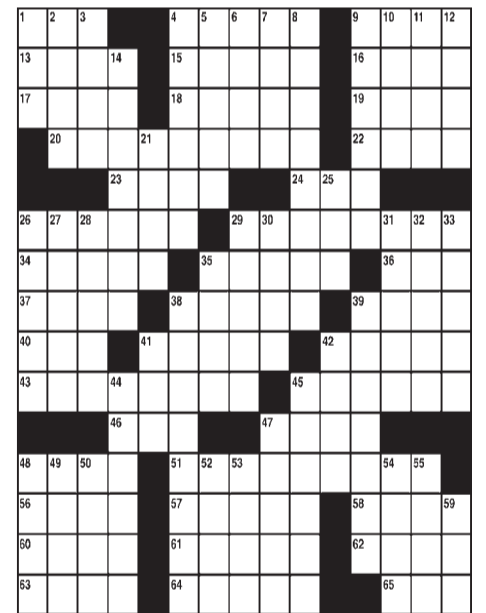
Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Yesterday's puzzle answer

4	2	5	3	6	8	7	9	1
8	1	6	9	2	7	5	4	3
3	7	9	4	5	1	6	8	2
7	5	4	6	1	2	8	3	9
2	8	3	7	9	5	1	6	4
6	9	1	8	3	4	2	7	5
5	4	8	1	7	3	9	2	6
9	3	2	5	8	6	4	1	7
1	6	7	2	4	9	3	5	8

ACROSS

- 1 Occupation
- 4 Go separate ways
- 9 Hair color
- 13 Street uprising
- 15 Largest city in Egypt
- 16 In a __; furious
- 17 Unkind remark
- 18 Bit of gossip
- 19 Microwave, e.g.
- 20 Amphetamine
- 22 " __ of the d'Urbervilles"
- 23 Blood analysis sites
- 24 Word attached to meal or cake
- 26 Come __; find
- 29 Cozy Alpine inn
- 34 Giggle or quifaw
- 35 Cheese variety
- 36 Stockings mishap
- 37 Military force
- 38 "Good things come to __ who wait"
- 39 Empty space
- 40 Clean the floor
- 41 Portals
- 42 Sugar __;
- 43 Vermont's state tree
- 43 Made blurry
- 45 Awakened
- 46 That girl
- 47 Saw or hammer
- 48 Pesky insect
- 51 "Some __ Evening"; song from "South Pacific"
- 56 Equipment
- 57 Approaches
- 58 Leave a room
- 60 Hurt
- 61 Fortune-teller's deck
- 62 Knighted woman
- 63 Holiday and Hampton
- 64 Goulashes
- 65 "Cry __ River"



Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

1/11/19

Thursday's Puzzle Solved

A	P	T	S	N	E	A	K	A	L	P	S				
S	P	E	W	P	E	A	C	E	T	I	R	E			
H	E	R	O	A	R	R	H	Y	T	H	M	I	A		
E	S	S	O	D	D	L	Y	R	E	A	M	S			
P	R	I	E	S	V	I	N								
A	L	I	E	N	S	R	E	C	A	P	S				
D	E	R	E	K	S	P	E	A	K	R	I	B			
A	V	I	D	V	I	R	A	L	T	O	T	O			
M	E	N	D	E	F	E	R	B	E	G	A	N			
E	G	O	I	S	T	B	U	R	Q	U	A	R	R	Y	
M	A	T	B	U	R	K	E								
A	S	P	E	N	A	D	I	E	T	S	E	E			
C	O	L	L	A	R	B	O	N	E	A	S	A	N		
T	R	E	E	A	L	I	G	N	H	E	R	D			
S	E	A	T	G	E	N	E	S	A	D	S				

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1/11/19

DOWN

- 1 Yrbk. section
- 2 Essential __; aromatherapist's bottles

- 3 Boxing match
- 4 Operating room attire
- 5 Simon & Newman
- 6 Peru's capital
- 7 Press clothing
- 8 Land turtle
- 9 Cavellike recess
- 10 __ about; praise highly
- 11 Eras
- 12 Strong urges
- 14 Three-book series
- 21 Loretta Swit sitcom
- 25 Jolson & Roker
- 26 Rental car agency
- 27 Chocolate-like pod
- 28 Fannies
- 29 Knight's weapon
- 30 Sign of affection
- 31 Word attached to rain or gum
- 32 Deceit; duplicity
- 33 Concluded
- 35 Loafer or moccasin
- 38 Violent streams of water
- 39 Jumped high, using a pole
- 41 Appropriate
- 42 Night light
- 44 Bracelet danglers
- 45 Cuts of beef
- 47 Fling

- 48 E's followers
- 49 Containing little fat
- 50 Deserve; merit
- 52 __ as a pin
- 53 Concern
- 54 Test
- 55 U.S. coin
- 59 Drink served hot or cold

Classifieds

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3BEDROM \$26k
*WK. 51 OV \$39k
*WK 52 OV \$46k
* Weeks 7 and 14-all views

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1BR WK # 2 room# D 102 even
year
1 BR WK# 2 room # G303 Odd
year
1 BR WK# 3 room # B203 even
year
1 BR WK# 3 room # G108 Odd
year.
\$3500 each

The Mill Resort

1 BR WK # 4 \$7000

Marriott Ocean Club

Platinum
1 BR Ocean View \$10,000
2 BR Ocean View \$16,000
2 BR Ocean Front \$24,000
Aruba Divi Phoenix
1 br wk 1 and 2
Rm 644 33 weeks remain
\$36,000 both

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2 BR Ocean View \$ 15,000
2 BR Ocean Side \$16,000
2 BR Ocean Front \$ 27,000
3 BR Ocean View \$26,000

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1 BR WK # 3
24 weeks remain \$ 8500
2 BR WK # 3
28 weeks remain \$ 25,000

Divi Links Golf

1 BR WK # 1
25 weeks remain \$8000
1 BR WK # 1 and 2
32 weeks remain \$ 9000 each
Studio wk # 5 and 6
25 and 30 Weeks remain \$
17,000 Both

Divi Links Golf

1 BR WK # 4 and 5
25 and 30 weeks remain \$ 9000
each
1 BR WK # 4
20 weeks remain \$9000

Divi Village

1 BR WK # 1
24 weeks remain \$ 9000
Studio WK # 1
23 weeks remain \$ 8000
Studio WK # 6
22weeks remain \$8000

Paradise Beach Villas

1 BR WK # 1 and 2
2nd phase 2nd floor
Pool/ Ocean View \$ 9000 each

Aruba Divi Phoenix

1 BR 1 1/2 Bath
10 Floor Tower wk 1
11 weeks remain \$7500

Aruba Divi Phoenix

2 BR Penthouse WK # 1
28 weeks remain \$35K
1 BR WK # 6 in the front villas
2nd floor 28 weeks remain \$
12,500
1BR WK # 8 \$ 16,500
6 building 4 th floor 29 weeks
remain

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Physicians criticize state lawsuits over pelvic mesh

By **GENE JOHNSON**

Associated Press

SEATTLE (AP) — Doctors who specialize in female pelvic medicine say lawsuits by four states, including Washington and California, over products used to treat pelvic floor disorders and incontinence might scare patients away from the best treatment options — or maybe even push the products off the market.

Sixty-three Washington surgeons signed a letter to state Attorney General Bob Ferguson, arguing his consumer-protection lawsuit against Johnson & Johnson and its Ethicon Inc. subsidiary is off-base. The lawsuit says the companies failed to disclose risks associated with the products, but in their letter the doctors said they were never deceived and that the case is based on a misapprehension of how they assess dangers posed by medical procedures.

"We have served on national and regional medical societies in women's health," wrote Dr. Jeffrey Clemons, a pelvic reconstructive surgeon in Tacoma. "It is astonishing to us that the AG is proceeding with this lawsuit without first availing themselves of the significant experience and expertise of this group."

Doctors in California are drafting a similar letter to Attorney General Xavier Becerra, and the president of the American Urogynecologic Society, which represents 1,900 medical professionals, has issued a statement expressing some of the same concerns.

Clemons and two other doctors who signed the Washington letter have been retained by defense

counsel as consultants in the case, but Clemons said he wrote it without payment or assistance from

mesh products to treat another condition, called pelvic organ prolapse. In such cases, pelvic or-

ket, though the attorney general's office says that's not the goal. Washington, California,

from representing that its surgical mesh is superior to traditional treatments, such as repair using the patient's tissue, and it says a key question is whether the pamphlets could have deceived the least sophisticated surgeons, not the most sophisticated.

In their letter last month, the surgeons insist they were never misled — nor could they have been, because they don't rely on a company's marketing materials or instruction pamphlets to divine the risks of medical devices.

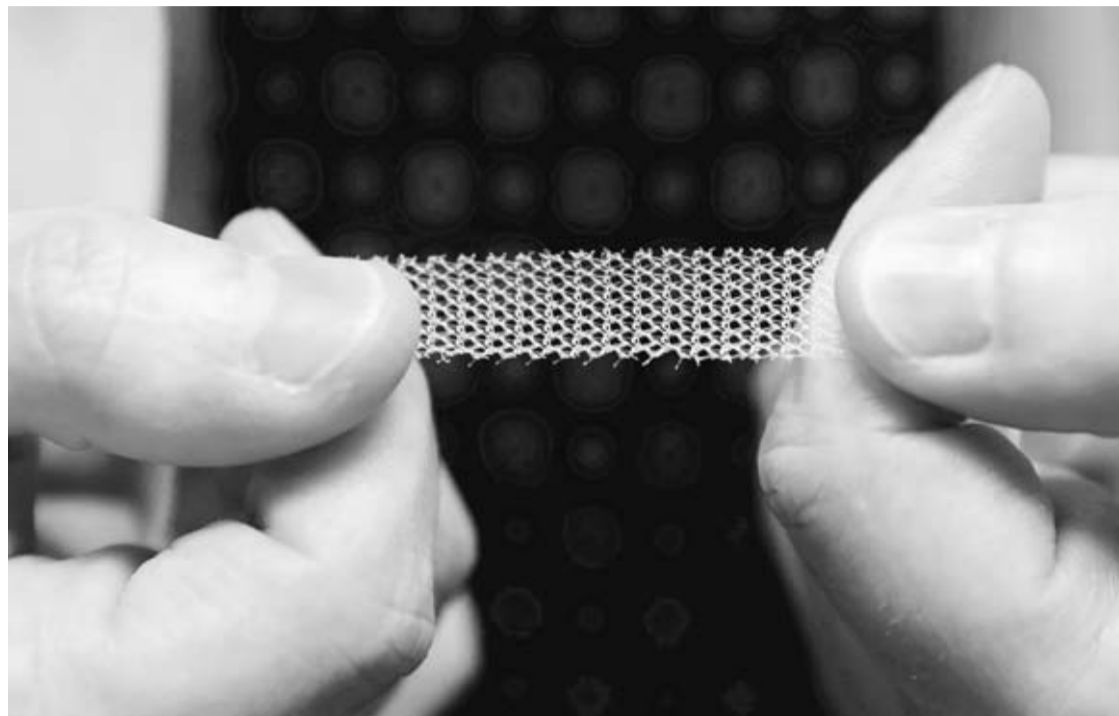
Instead, the letter said, they rely on their education, journals, conferences, textbooks and other unbiased sources, and they counsel their patients accordingly.

In declarations filed in King County Superior Court, some said Ethicon paid for them to undergo training that fully explored the devices' risks, and others said they learned about the uses and risks from those specially trained doctors.

Clemons and the other surgeons do not dispute that some women have suffered complications from the use of mesh to treat incontinence, but they say any surgery has risks, and the risks of that procedure are well within accepted norms. Millions of women worldwide have been treated with mid-urethral slings.

The letter cited a recent large study of the English National Health Service database that found complications prompted the removal of mesh slings in just 1.4 percent of patients within the first year after surgery, 2.7 percent within five years and 3.3 percent within nine years.

In fact, Clemons said, the mid-urethral sling has become the "gold standard" among surgical options for stress urinary incontinence because it offers better outcomes than other types of surgery, can be performed on heavier patients who otherwise would be ineligible for surgery, and requires less cutting and recovery time. □



In this Dec. 20, 2018, photo, Dr. Jeffrey Clemons, a pelvic reconstructive surgeon, holds a sample of transvaginal mesh used to treat pelvic floor disorders and incontinence in women as he poses for a photo in Tacoma, Wash.

Associated Press

Johnson & Johnson. At issue is "transvaginal mesh" — plastic mesh products that are implanted to correct a variety of pelvic floor disorders.

They came on the U.S. market in the late 1990s to treat stress urinary incontinence — a condition triggered by physical activity like coughing, sneezing or running that is common and sometimes debilitating in women after childbirth. The treatment involves using a thin mesh strip, called a "mid-urethral sling," to support the urethra, the tube that carries urine away from the bladder.

The products were so successful — one of the most significant advances in women's health in recent decades, the physicians said — that companies began developing similar

gans such as the uterus and bladder drop from their normal position due to muscle weakening. A sheet of mesh can be used to support the pelvic floor. However, treating pelvic organ prolapse with mesh proved problematic after those products were introduced in 2004.

They were more likely to bring serious complications, including permanent incontinence, severe discomfort and an inability to have sex.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration issued warnings in 2008 and 2011, and companies pulled most of the transvaginal mesh products for organ prolapse from the market.

Tens of thousands of women have filed liability claims against Johnson & Johnson and other companies, with some saying they knew nothing about the potential complications.

The doctors say Washington's lawsuit conflates the acceptable risks of using pelvic mesh to treat incontinence with the less tolerable risks of using it for pelvic organ prolapse. They're worried it could force mid-urethral slings off the mar-

Kentucky and Mississippi are pursuing lawsuits that claim Johnson & Johnson deceived doctors and patients, and that the surgeries ruined some women's quality of life. They say product marketing brochures and instruction pamphlets should have contained much more detail about the risks.

The company updated its instruction pamphlets in 2015 — effectively admitting the earlier versions were inadequate, Washington state says.

"The purpose of our lawsuit is to require Johnson & Johnson to disclose to doctors and patients the serious risks associated with surgical mesh," Ferguson said in an emailed statement. "Johnson & Johnson knew about these risks for years and misrepresented them for more than a decade, even as it sold thousands of these devices in Washington."

Washington's lawsuit seeks fines for each alleged violation of the state's Consumer Protection Act, an amount that could easily run into the millions. The attorney general's office also wants to bar Ethicon

Flexin' in her Complexion: Bullied girl a messenger of hope

By **LEANNE ITALIE**

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Kheris Rogers was in the first grade in a predominantly white private school in Los Angeles when she felt the bite of racism among her peers — she was being bullied because of her dark skin. She tearfully kept it to herself, eventually turning to her older sister, Taylor Pollard, and switching to a more diverse school, where colorism among fellow African-American students surprised and confused her. With her young sister's self-esteem bruised, Pollard inadvertently launched Kheris to social media fame in 2017 when she posted a photo of the girl on Twitter dressed up for a fashion show, using their love grandmother's down-home words for a hashtag: "Flexininhercomplexion." Soon, Kheris had her own Twitter and Instagram accounts (@KherisPoppin) and was posting photo shoots of herself that she and Pollard created. Her own fashion line followed, with T-shirts sporting her tagline, "Flexin' in My Complexion," along with backpacks reading "The Miseducation of Melanin" and other apparel and ac-

cessories. Lupita Nyong'o posted a photo of herself wearing a black version of the shirt with bright yellow letters in support of Kheris. Whoopi Goldberg sported one while attending the Rodarte show at New York Fashion Week in September. Alicia Keys lauded her black girl magic. While the words of her tormenters no longer sting, they haven't been forgotten. The behavior wasn't restricted to children, either. "The kids would always call me names," Kheris, now 12, told The Associated Press in a recent interview. "They would always tease me for my dark-skin complexion. They used to call me dead roach and say I've been in the oven too long. When I really knew I was being bullied because of my color was when my teacher handed me a black crayon instead of a brown crayon to draw our portraits for parent conferences." Pollard, who at 24 is now Kheris' manager, suspected something was amiss and Kheris finally told her family. "I had no friends. I was only invited to one of the birthday parties that they had.



In this Dec. 19, 2018 photo, social media personality Kheris Rogers poses for a portrait in Los Angeles.

Everybody else was invited and I wasn't," Kheris recalled. Now in middle school, things are more than just a little looking up. Kheris was chosen as one of Teen Vogue's "21 Under 21" inspiring girls and femmes of 2018 and attended the magazine's teen summit. She was picked by LeBron James as one of 16 people to help mark his 16th shoe release with Nike, modeling in ads for the company. She's been featured in a

spread in Essence magazine and walked the runway of "America's Next Top Model" after Tyra Banks learned of her plight. She has shown her own line in Harlem during New York Fashion Week, and she hasn't hit the eighth grade yet. Julee Wilson, fashion and beauty director for Essence magazine, called support for Kheris "both an honor and responsibility." She added: "To stand in the face of society's narrow

beauty standards isn't an easy task, and she's doing it with an incredible amount of grace. We can't wait to see how Kheris pushes the 'Flexin' in My Complexion movement forward in the future. There's no doubt in our minds that she'll continue to remind the world that Black is incredibly beautiful." Mom Erika Pollard, a social worker, said Kheris travels the country speaking at conferences about empowerment. □

Star of the upcoming "The Sopranos" prequel reveals details

By **JOHN CARUCCI**

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — The star of the upcoming "The Sopranos" prequel says a young Tony Soprano will be a part of the film — but had good reason to be careful about how much else he revealed about "The Many Saints of Newark." Alessandro Nivola talked to The Associated Press about the project on the red carpet Wednesday before a panel discussion led by creator David Chase to celebrate the 20th anniversary of "The Sopranos" in New York. "I guess I got to be kind of discreet about it, so David Chase doesn't kill me," Nivola said. "I'm playing



Alessandro Nivola attends HBO's "The Sopranos" 20th anniversary at the SVA Theatre on Wednesday, Jan. 9, 2019, in New York.

Associated Press

Dickie Moltisanti, who is the central character in the movie, and he is Christopher Moltisanti's dad." Christopher Moltisanti, who

was played by Michael Imperioli in the series, was a protege of Tony Soprano, the New Jersey mob boss portrayed by James Gandolfini.

Though the elder Moltisanti never appeared in the series, he is often mentioned as part of Christopher's backstory. The father was gunned down when Christopher was young and Nivola said the film will explore the interlocking history of Dickie Moltisanti and Soprano. "Tony will be a character in the film, and as was mentioned throughout 'The Sopranos' series, my character was an important person in his life, and it examines that relationship as well," Nivola said. The film begins in 1967 with the backdrop of the race riots that tore through Newark, New Jersey. Nivola

said racial tension is "a big part of the story." Nivola cited "weird coincidences" that told him this role was meant for him, including the fact that his real-life neighbor is Tim Van Patten, who directed many episodes of "The Sopranos." Another coincidence connects his own family to the show: An episode in the second season shows Soprano visiting Naples, Italy, and in one of the scenes, just over Gandolfini's shoulder, is seen a sculpture — made by Nivola's grandfather, the artist Constantino Nivola. "So it was meant to be or something," Alessandro Nivola said. □

'A Dog's Way Home' is saccharine and sentimental

By **LINDSEY BAHR**
Associated Press

How much of a sweet tooth do you have when it comes to movies? It's a question you might want to consider before stepping out for "A Dog's Way Home," W. Bruce Cameron adaptation of his book about a dog who finds her way back to her owner across 400 miles of Colorado terrain, because this is one sugary concoction. Not that it's ineffective — I dare even non dog-lovers not to get a little misty eyed at the inevitable conclusion — it's just very, very, VERY earnest, like a PBS Kids morning show meets a cute puppy pics slideshow with much higher production value.

Bryce Dallas Howard provides the honeyed voice for the heroine, Bella, a stray who lives happily with some dogs and cats under an abandoned property until animal services snags about half (including her mom). She soon gets adopted by a kind college-aged kid across the street, Lucas (Jonah Hauer-King),



This image released by Sony Pictures shows Bella, portrayed by Shelby the dog, in a scene from Columbia Pictures' "A Dog's Way Home."

who works at the VA and lives with his mom, a war vet who has depression, played by Ashley Judd. Bella is a very cute pup who grows into a very cute dog with limited grammar and comprehension skills that never quite evolve past that of a 4-year-old

(i.e. "I'm ready to do 'go home!'"). She also happens to be enemy No. 1 of the city of Denver after she falls on the wrong side of a ban on breeds designated as pit bulls, and impounds them on sight.

"I know, it's stupid," explains an employee at the animal shelter admirably succinctly. Another character, Olivia, played by

Alexandra Shipp of "Love, Simon" describes it as, "basically racism." This movie really has it in for Denver's Ordinance Sec. 8-55.

Once the authorities get word of Bella, and impound her once, her cozy existence with Lucas and his mom comes to an end and she goes to live, for a time, with some relatives of Olivia's who live in New

Mexico. But the dutiful and deeply nostalgic Bella decides to take things into her own hands and find her way back to Denver and Lucas.

Directed by Charles Martin Smith, of such animal adventures as "Dolphin Tale" and "Air Bud," "A Dog's Way Home" is actually surprisingly intense. Bella goes dumpster-diving one day with a pack of many dogs she comes across, she witnesses poachers killing a cougar, befriends a CGI baby cougar, steals food from quite a few people and establishments, survives an avalanche, a free-way and even lives alongside a homeless man for a while. She is laser-focused on getting back to Lucas, however, and even the good situations she comes across (like living in the very stylish and expensive home of a couple who take her in) aren't enough.

Although it might be a stretch to categorize this as a movie, "A Dog's Way Home" is harmless enough and a nice little adventure that's fit for the whole family. But you might want to have the tissues ready. □

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Lady Gaga apologizes for R. Kelly collaboration

Associated Press
NEW YORK (AP) — Lady Gaga is sorry for her 2013 duet with R. Kelly in the wake of sexual misconduct allegations against the singer, and she intends to remove the song from streaming services.

"What I am hearing about the allegations against R. Kelly is absolutely horrifying and indefensible," she said. Posting on social media on Wednesday, Gaga wrote that she had collaborated with Kelly on "Do What U Want (With My Body)" during a "dark time" in her life as a victim of sexual assault. She said she should have sought therapy or other help instead.

"I think it's clear how explicitly twisted my thinking was at the time. If I could go back and have a talk with my younger self I'd tell her



In this Nov. 24, 2013 file photo, Lady Gaga, center, and R. Kelly perform "Do What U Want (With My Body)" at the American Music Awards in Los Angeles.

Associated Press
to go through the therapy I have since then so that I could understand the confused post-traumatic state that I was in," she wrote. "I can't go back, but I can go forward and continue to support women, men, and people of all sexual identities, and of all races, who are victims of sexual assault." □

Fox's 'Masked Singer' draws a strong audience for debut

By DAVID BAUDER

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Fox hoped to use a week when there wasn't much else on broadcast television besides football to draw attention to its new competition "The Masked Singer." The strategy proved sound. The Nielsen company said that 9.37 million people watched the series debut last Wednesday. That was the biggest audience for unscripted show premiere on television in the last seven years.

Most promisingly for Fox, which is starved for a hit, more precise statistics illustrated a strong buzz for the show. Its ratings grew in the show's second half hour, meaning people were attracted to the program through word of mouth as it was airing. That's unusual for a new show, when attention typically slips as the hour goes on.

The show also padded its stats with people who caught it through delayed viewing or streaming. Add in those numbers, and Fox estimates some 14 million people checked out Fox's attempt to establish a new



This combination of photos released by Fox shows NFL wide receiver Antonio Brown in a hippo costume as he stands with host Nick Cannon, left, and Brown after he revealed his identity in the series premiere of "The Masked Singer".

music competition series. A big test will come this week and beyond, when "The Masked Singer" has more competition. NBC also debuted its own high-profile competition series last week, "Titan Games." It reached 6.5 million people, which was more than anything else on

NBC prime-time last week except for the Golden Globes telecast, Nielsen said. The Globes were seen by 18.6 million people, down slightly from last year. Football continues to be king, with Fox drawing nearly 29.4 million people to see Seattle and Dallas compete in an NFL wild-

card game, Nielsen said. Fox won the week in prime-time, averaging 7.9 million viewers. NBC had 7.4 million, CBS had 5.7 million, ABC had 4.1 million, Univision had 1.36 million, ION Networks had 1.35 million, Telemundo had 910,000 and the CW averaged 610,000.

Associated Press

ESPN topped the cable networks with a prime-time average of 3.48 million viewers. Fox News Channel had 1.59 million, MSNBC had 1.54 million, Hallmark had 1.45 million and HGTV had 1.27 million.

ABC's "World News Tonight" topped the evening newscasts with an average of 9.4 million viewers. NBC's "Nightly News" had 8.9 million viewers on average and the "CBS Evening News" drew 6.3 million.

For the week of Dec. 31-Jan. 6, the top 10 shows, their networks and viewerships: NFL Wild Card: Seattle at Dallas, Fox, 29.38 million; "Golden Globe Awards," NBC, 18.61 million; Rose Bowl: Washington vs. Ohio State, ESPN, 16.31 million; "Sugar Bowl Pregame," ESPN, 15.02 million; Sugar Bowl: Texas vs. Georgia, ESPN, 14.07 million; "The Big Bang Theory" (Thursday, 8:30 p.m.), CBS, 12.8 million; "Wild Card Pregame," Fox, 11.534 million; "Primetime New Year's Rockin' Eve, Part 2" (Monday, 10 p.m.), ABC, 11.531 million; "Young Sheldon," CBS, 10.95 million; "The Masked Singer," Fox, 9.37 million. □

'The Widows' is intriguing debut by Jess Montgomery

By OLIVE H. COGDILL

Associated Press

"The Widows: a Novel" (Minotaur), by Jess Montgomery

The atmosphere of an old-fashioned Western permeates this intriguing debut that mixes workers' rights, corruption, Prohibition and women's rights set in the harshly stark Appalachian Ohio coal-mining country during 1925.

Beautifully plotted and filled with believable characters, "The Widows" explores an era and an area struggling to be a part of the modern 20th century, yet constantly pulled backward to its unsettled past. Jess Montgomery, executive director of the Antioch Writers' Workshop, draws on actual historical incidents that richly explore



This cover image released by Minotaur shows "The Widows" by Jess Montgomery.

Associated Press

the people behind events in the launch of this series that shows much potential. "The Widows" are Lily Ross, married to Bronwyn County Sheriff Daniel Ross and pregnant with her third

child, and Marvena Whitcomb, a moonshiner and union organizer whose common-law husband John was killed trying to rescue trapped miners. On the surface, the two women have nothing in common, but a connection is revealed after Daniel is killed when escorting a prisoner who was a miner. The women meet when Marvena, trying to find Daniel and unaware of the situation, shows up at his funeral to ask if Daniel has found her wayward daughter, Eula, or her brother, Tom. Reluctantly, Lily and Marvena begin an uneasy alliance, spurred on by their mutual grief over Daniel. Both women prove their strength and intelligence and that they are capable of standing up to men who

routinely dismiss women. Marvena's union activism has long set her apart. But Lily, appointed acting sheriff by men who think they can manage her, shows her mettle by taking her new position very seriously. This often puts her at odds with Daniel's nasty half brother, Luther, and the Pinkertons he hired to control, with violence if necessary, the mine workers. Montgomery skillfully explores the residents whose lives are ruled by the coal corporation that keeps them bound to their dangerous jobs and in poverty because of the high rent of the company-owned housing and rules about using the company store for all supplies. Many of the coal miners were World War I veterans, returning home

only to find few opportunities and a home-grown war between the miners and the coal company. Lily and Marvena are just two of the widows who have lost their husbands to the mines, violence or disease; there's a reason why one mine is nicknamed The Widow-maker. "The Widows" also shows how class differences influence how the residents deal with each other — manifested in Lily, who came from a well-off family, and Marvena, whose family was poor — and how this is overcome. Lily is based on the life of Maude Collins, Ohio's first female sheriff. While Marvena is based on activist Mary Harris "Mother" Jones, though Montgomery takes a more fictional approach with that character. □

'Tech addicts' seek solace in 12 steps and rehab

By **MARTHA IRVINE**

Associated Press

BELLEVUE, Wash. (AP) — We like to say we're addicted to our phones or an app or some new show on a streaming video service.

But for some people, tech gets in the way of daily functioning and self-care. We're talking flunk-your-classes, can't-find-a-job, live-in-a-dark-hole kinds of problems, with depression, anxiety and sometimes suicidal thoughts part of the mix.

Suburban Seattle, a major tech center, has become a hub for help for so-called "tech addicts," with residential rehab, psychologists who specialize in such treatment and 12-step meetings.

"The drugs of old are now repackaged. We have a new foe," Cosette Rae says of the barrage of tech. A former developer in the tech world, she heads a Seattle area rehab center called reSTART Life, one of the few residential programs in the nation specializing in tech addiction.

Use of that word — addiction — when it comes to devices, online content and the like is still debated in the mental health world. But many practitioners agree that tech use is increasingly intertwined with the problems of those seeking help.

An American Academy of Pediatrics review of worldwide research found that excessive use of video games alone is a serious problem for as many as 9 percent of young people. This summer, the World Health Organization also added "gaming disorder" to its list of afflictions. A similar diagnosis is being considered in the United States. It can be a taboo subject in an industry that frequently faces criticism for using "persuasive design," intentionally harnessing psychological concepts to make tech all the more enticing.

One 27-year-old man, found through a 12-step program for tech addicts, works in the very industry that peddles the games,



In this Dec. 9, 2018 photo, a 27-year-old self-described tech addict poses for a portrait in front of a video game store at a mall in Everett, Wash.

videos and other online content that has long been his vice. He does cloud maintenance for a suburban Seattle tech company and constantly finds himself fending off temptation.

"I'm like an alcoholic working at a bar," he laments. He spoke on the condition that he not be identified, fearing he might harm his career in an industry he's long loved.

As a toddler, he sat on his dad's lap in their Seattle area home as they played simple video games on a Mac Classic II computer. By early elementary school, he got his first Super Nin-

tendo system and spent hours playing Yoshi's Story, a game where the main character searched for "lucky fruit."

As he grew, so did one of the world's major tech hubs. Led by Microsoft, it rose from the nondescript suburban landscape and farm fields here, just a short drive from the home he still shares with his mom, who split from her husband when their only child was 11.

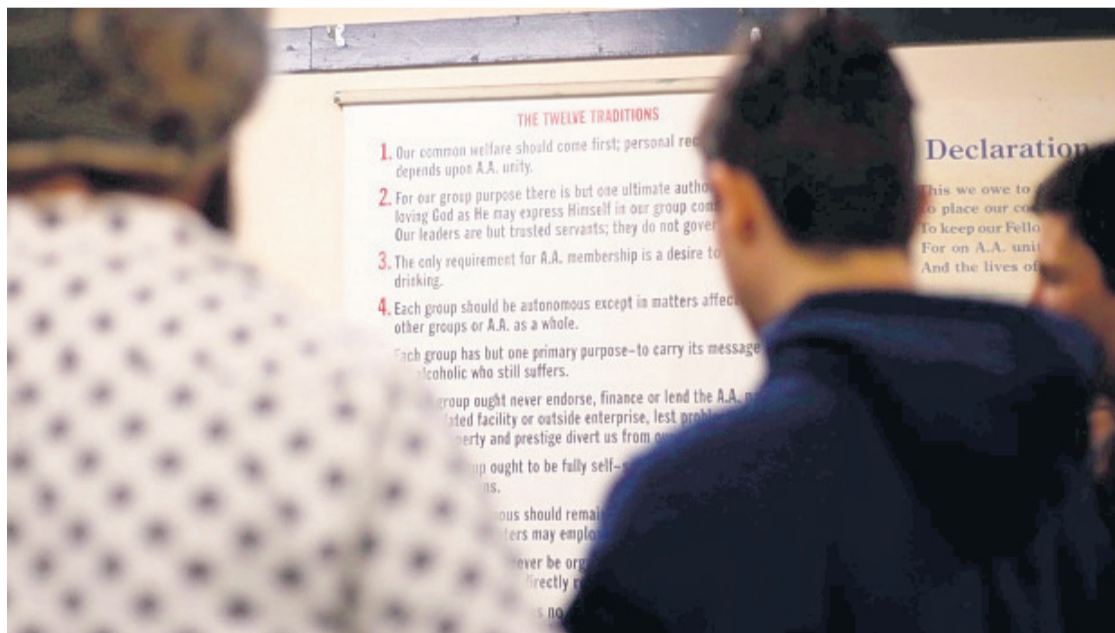
As a teen, he took an interest in music and acting but recalls how playing games increasingly became a way to escape life. "I go

online instead of dealing with my feelings," he says.

He'd been seeing a therapist for depression and severe social anxiety. But attending college out of state allowed more freedom and less structure, so he spent even more time online. His grades plummeted, forcing him to change majors, from engineering to business.

After graduating in 2016 and moving home, he'd go to a nearby restaurant or the library to use the Wi-Fi, claiming he was looking for a job but having no luck. Instead, he was spending hours on Reddit, an online

Associated Press



In this Dec. 8, 2018, photo, young men gather to talk after a 12-step meeting for Internet & Tech Addiction Anonymous in Bellevue, Wash.

Associated Press

forum where people share news and comments, or viewing YouTube videos. Sometimes, he watched online porn.

Others who attend a 12-step meeting of the Internet & Tech Addiction Anonymous know the struggle.

"I had to be convinced that this was a 'thing,'" says Walker, a 19-year-old from Washington whose parents insisted he get help after video gaming trashed his first semester of college. He agreed to speak only if identified by first name, as required by the 12-step tenets.

Help is found at facilities like reSTART. Clients "detox" from tech at a secluded ranch and move on to a group home.

They commit to eating well and regular sleep and exercise. They find jobs, and many eventually return to college. They also make "bottom line" promises to give up video games or any other problem content, as well as drugs and alcohol, if those are issues. They use monitored smartphones with limited function — calls, texts and emails and access to maps.

The young tech worker didn't go to reSTART. But he, too, has apps on his phone that send reports about what he's viewing to his 12-step sponsor, a fellow tech addict named Charlie, a 30-year-old reSTART graduate.

At home, the young man also persuaded his mom to get rid of Wi-Fi to lessen the temptation.

He still relapses every couple months, often when he's tired or upset or very bored. He tells himself that his problem isn't as bad as other tech addicts.

"Then," the young man says, "I discover very quickly that I am actually an addict, and I do need to do this."

Having Charlie to lean on helps. "He's a role model," he says.

"He has a place of his own. He has a dog. He has friends."

That's what he wants for himself. □